DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 478 473 PS 031 389

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|---|---|
| AUTHOR | Rodgers-Rhyme, Anne; Wright, Arlene |
| TITLE | Community Approaches to Serving Four-Year-Old Children in Wisconsin: Lessons Learned from Wisconsin Communities. |
| INSTITUTION | Wisconsin State Dept. of Public Instruction, Madison. |
| PUB DATE | 2003-02-00 |
| NOTE | 77p.; For related document, see PS 031 386. The project was funded by The Trust for Early Education in cooperation with Wisconsin Forces for Four-Year-Olds Project. |
| AVAILABLE FROM | Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 125 S. Webster Street, P.O. Box 7841, Madison, WI 53707-7841. Tel: 800-441-4563 (Toll Free); Fax: 608-266-2529; Web site: http://www.dpi.state.wi.us. For full text: http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/ dpi/dlcl/bbfcsp/pdf/eccommap.pdf. |
| PUB TYPE | Reports - Descriptive (141) |
| EDRS PRICE | EDRS Price MF01/PC04 Plus Postage. |
| DESCRIPTORS | Access to Education; *Child Care; *Community Coordination; *Community Programs; *Delivery Systems; Educational Innovation ; Focus Groups; Preschool Children; *Preschool Education; Program Descriptions; Questionnaires; State Programs |
| IDENTIFIERS | Access to Services; Barriers to Change; Barriers to Implementation; Barriers to Innovation; Project Head Start; Public Private Partnership Programs; *Universal Preschool |

ABSTRACT

The Wisconsin Forces for Four-Year-Olds Project promotes a collaborative community approach to offering universal access to four-year-old kindergarten services for Wisconsin 4-year-olds. Presented in three major sections, this report offers an overview of a community approach to serving 4-year-olds, summarizes experiences in seven communities around the state with existing four-year-old kindergarten collaboratives, and discusses the benefits and challenges of community approaches. Information is based on questionnaires and focus group sessions conducted in Eau Claire, La Crosse, Portage, Madison, Milwaukee, Montello, and Wausau as community planning partners reflected on their successes, challenges, and advice they would give to other communities. Study participants identified lessons learned related to start-up, collaboration among partners, public awareness and community support, planning and decision making, delivery models, staffing patterns, program standards and curriculum, and shared resources. The report concludes by asserting that the most important lesson learned is that if a community starts with a group of interested citizens able to build consensus around common beliefs and vision, their passion infuses a can-do attitude that can make the vision possible. The report's three appendices contain a bibliography of eight references and five related websites, list contacts for existing Wisconsin community approaches, and present sample documents from Wisconsin community approaches. (KB)

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# Community Approaches to Serving Four-Year-Old Children in Wisconsin

## Lessons Learned from Wisconsin Communities

**February 2003**

A project funded by

**The Trust for Early Education**

To support the

**Wisconsin Forces for Four-Year-Olds Project**

Administered by the
**Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction**
in cooperation with
other state agencies, related associations,
early childhood projects and communities

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# Community Approaches to Serving Four-Year-Old Children in Wisconsin:

## Lessons Learned from Wisconsin Communities

## January 2003

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Bulletin No. 03126

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# Foreword

We know clearly that quality early education opportunities have profound lifelong benefits for children, as well as for the communities in which they live. We know that communities across the state are looking for new ways to provide such opportunities for their children and their families.

We also know that despite Wisconsin's long history of offering four-year-old public school kindergarten, dating back to the late 1800s, communities are facing challenges in addressing important issues around quality care and education. Therefore, we are pleased to have a grant from the Trust for Early Education to promote a collaborative community approach to four-year-old kindergarten. This Wisconsin project is called Forces for Four-Year-Olds.

One of the funded activities of the project, was to collect resource information and data from communities with existing four-year- old kindergarten collaboratives. This report summarizes real-life experiences in six communities around the state.

Although universal four-year-old services will look and feel different in each community, there is one certainty: the goal of helping every child achieve a good start cannot be accomplished by schools alone.

I commend the communities featured in this report for their honest and caring approach to establishing collaboratives for our four-year-olds. We all benefit from their courage and persistence, knowledge, and experience.

Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

# Acknowledgements

Publication of *Community Approaches to Serving Four-Year-Old Children: Lessons Learned from Wisconsin Communities* is the result of the interest, support, and expertise of many individuals. We would especially like to thank the following people:

Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
Jill Haglund, Early Childhood Consultant, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
Helene Stebbins, Trust for Early Education, PEW Charitable Trust

**Writers and Researchers:**
Anne Rodgers-Rhyme, Education Consultant, Madison, Wisconsin
Arlene Wright, Education Consultant, Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin

Many individuals involved in public-private partnerships throughout the State of Wisconsin contributed valuable information for the publication of *Community Approaches to Serving Four-Year-Old Children: Lessons Learned from Wisconsin Communities.* We would like to thank all of the individuals who participated in interviews or focus group sessions in the following communities:

- Eau Claire
- La Crosse
- Portage
- Madison
- Milwaukee
- Montello
- Wausau

A special thank you to the community coordinators for arranging the focus group sessions, completing surveys and providing documents regarding their community approaches:

- Patty Horecki, Eau Claire Community Volunteer, Healthy Communities, City County Health Department
- Cindy Ericksen, Early Childhood Community Liaison Family Resources, La Crosse School District
- Peter T. Hibner, Business Administrator, Portage Community School District
- Susan L. Abplanalp, Elementary Lead Principal, Madison Metropolitan School District
- Kathy Schouten, Program Coordinator, CAP Services, Inc. Head Start, Montello Early Learning Center
- Julie Burmesch, Coordinator District Preschool Collaboration Programs, Wausau Public Schools

For inspiration and advice, we would like to thank:
Jim McCoy, Project Consultant, Hollandale, Wisconsin
Ruth Anne Landsverk, Family-School-Community Coordinator, WDPI

**Wisconsin Forces for Four-Year-Olds Project Participants:**

A wide variety of state agencies, statewide associations and early childhood projects have participated in the Wisconsin Forces for Four Project. The planning group involved the agencies, associations, and projects listed below. The steering committee is a smaller group, noted by the asterisk (*) in the following list:

- Association of Wisconsin School Administrators (AWSA): Tom Beattie and Donna Sorensen*
- Children's Trust Fund : Mary Anne Synder
- Head Start Collaboration Project: Linda Leonhart*
- School Administrators Alliance: John Forrester
- Waisman Center Early Intervention Project: Linda Tuchman* and Joan Ershler
- WI Association of School Boards: Sherri Krause*
- WI Association of School District Administrator: Miles Turner
- WI Child Care Administrators Association: Mary Madsen* and David Linsmeier*
- WI Child Care and Education Coalition: Diane Gallagher and Jim Leonhart*
- WI Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies/Network: Jane Penner Hoppe and Chris Breunig*
- WI Family Child Care Association: Dianna Smith and Dawn Abel*
- WI Child Care Improvement Project: Jane Whitacre
- WI Council of Administrators of Special Services: Phil Knobel
- WI Council of Religious and Independent Schools: Betty Soderman
- WI Council on Children and Families: Nan Brien* and Jeanne Erickson*
- WI Dept of Health and Family Services: Anne Carmody* and Colleen Cantlon*
- WI Department of Public Instruction: Margaret Planner, Jane Grinde, Jennifer Kammerud*, Jill Haglund*
- WI Dept of Work Force Development: Edie Sprehn and Kath McGurk*
- WI Early Childhood Association: Mary Babula* and Jeannette Paulson
- WI Early Childhood Collaborating Partners: Many of the participants also represented WECCP
- WI Education Association Council: Katie Stout
- WI Federation of Teachers: Bob Beglinger
- WI Head Start Association: Shelley Cousin*
- WI Kindergarten Association: Kathy Hartjes*
- Parents Plus of Wisconsin: Sue Werley*
- University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee: Pam Boulton

# Executive Summary

## Overview and Rationale to Creating a Community Approach to Serving Four-Year-Olds

Wisconsin is a leading state in the provision of universally available four-year-old kindergarten programs and currently may be the only state in which the four-year-old program is directly built into the state school aid formula.

Early childhood advocates consider the community approach the most logical way to provide universal four-year-old kindergarten. This approach focuses on a school-community interface, also referred to as a public–private partnership. In this approach, collaborations that involve a broad range of community early childhood stakeholders are forged to achieve a common goal that could not be achieved by a single agency acting alone. The community approach works toward the goal of achieving emotional, educational, societal, and physical well being of children. It treats education and care as if they are two sides of the same coin, not separate entities.

Even when early childhood and health and family support services exist, they may not always be affordable, services may be fragmented and inaccessible, and many programs may lack the resources to support qualified staff and to provide effective, quality services. Consequently, public schools and communities began to look toward four-year-old kindergarten funding as a way to provide early learning opportunities to all four-year-old children.

## Creating Community Approaches

Many communities in Wisconsin are transforming their current system of separate care and education services into community approaches. Seven communities in Wisconsin with existing collaboratives participated in a focus group process. Additional information and resource documents were gathered from these selected community collaboratives in order to develop this summary. The following lessons learned are a compilation of the continuously evolving process of collaboration and fall into the following areas (not necessarily in order):

**Getting Started**

- Invite everyone to the table from the beginning.
- Build on already existing collaborative efforts within your community.
- Learn from the expertise of other public-private partnerships in Wisconsin.

**Collaboration Among the Partners**

- Create a vision.
- Build trust with each other and maintain strong relationships.
- Develop effective communication with all partners.

### Public Awareness and Community Support

- Get support from the community and involve them from the beginning.
- Establish ongoing communication systems with the community, including the media.

### Planning and Decision Making

- Develop effective governance and a committee structure.
- Build consensus in making decisions.
- Develop written agreements.

### Delivery Models include:

- School Site with School District Teacher.
- Community Site with School District Teacher.
- Community Site with a Licensed Pre-K Teacher.
- At-Home Educational Support.

### Staffing Patterns

- Partners need to share similar philosophies and beliefs regarding teaching and learning.
- Teachers in four-year-old kindergarten must hold a kindergarten license.

### Program Standards and Curriculum

- Curriculum needs to be developmentally appropriate.
- Standards and benchmarks should guide the curriculum.
- Curriculum is flexible and sensitive in order to meet the needs of the diverse population of children.

### Shared Resources

- Blended funding streams can be utilized to support collaborative services.
- Collaborative partners also share transportation, space, equipment, materials, and professional development.

## Benefits and Challenges of Community Approaches

Collaborative partners in Wisconsin have learned many lessons about the advantages and benefits to children, families, and collaborative partners:

- Families have the choice of program options, location, and schedule, or to keep their child at home.
- Community approaches provide a family-friendly environment that unifies care and education for the child and the family. Services are no longer fragmented and duplicated.

- Wrap around services such as care and education programs provided in the same environment allow for fewer transitions for children as well as the opportunity for parents, educators, and care providers to communicate with each other.
- Families who previously could not afford to send their children to a preschool now can enroll their child in a four-year-old program.
- Administrators and staff involved can benefit from the partnership by learning from each other, sharing knowledge and ideas, understanding each other's standards, and supporting one another.
- The community partners found that their partnerships provided opportunities for each other that would not have occurred if services were offered in isolation.
- Some of the greatest benefits for partners are shared leadership, pooling of resources, and the sharing of responsibility for accomplishments.

The challenges can either help the community collaborative solidify and strengthen its identity or cause it to break apart.

- Collaborative partners need sufficient time to become inclusive and trusting before they can tackle certain issues.
- The integrity of the program and services to children and families is affected by staff's ability to successfully work together.
- Coordinating transportation of children to collaborative programs may be difficult to arrange due to agency policies and budget constraints.
- Wage compensation for staff within collaboratives is unequal.
- Some parents are concerned about their young children riding the bus.

The community approach to providing universal services to four-year-olds is helping break many of the traditional barriers to success when a community starts a new program. Instead of competition and divisiveness that often occur with new initiatives or scarce resources, the communities interviewed are collaborating through the formation of public-private partnerships for the benefit of young children and their families.

# Introduction

## Purpose of the Project

The Trust for Early Education (TEE) funded a planning grant to promote universal services for four-year-olds through community collaborations in the State of Wisconsin. The TEE believed that Wisconsin's four-year-old kindergarten school financing and the collaborative approaches existing in several communities provided a venue to promote the philosophy and goals of TEE. The grant planning committee, consisting of representatives from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (WDPI), the Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners, and a wide variety of child care, Head Start, and education associations, adopted a name for the project: Wisconsin Forces for Four-Year-Olds. The WDPI is the fiscal agent and lead agency for this project.

## Methodology

External researchers collected information and resources through community approach questionnaires and a focus group process with existing collaboratives in Wisconsin. The purpose of the focus group interviews was to engage community planning partners in a reflective dialogue as they answered questions about their greatest successes, biggest challenges, and advice they would give to other communities. Focus group members in each of the collaboratives provided and shared data on planning processes, consensus building, financing mechanisms, resource sharing, personnel approaches, professional development, and program standards. The information gathered is compiled in this summary report that documents the status of the community approach to four-year-old kindergarten in the State of Wisconsin. Interviews or focus groups were conducted with the following seven communities: Montello, La Crosse, Wausau, Milwaukee, Portage, Madison, and Eau Claire. Focus group participants included: administrators, principals, teachers (private and public schools), child care providers, parents, and representatives from private preschools, Head Start, child care resource and referral agencies, family resource centers and support agencies, and county human services. Four of the seven communities have existing community four-year-old kindergarten collaboratives; one is currently in transition; and two of the communities have active planning efforts. Information and resource samples were analyzed into key areas that are outlined in the table of contents.

## Overview of Document

The intent of this document is to provide the reader with information about seven Wisconsin communities which have collaborative approaches to serving four-year olds. These seven communities learned valuable lessons as they formed partnerships and

planned and implemented community approaches. This document tells a story of the lessons the communities learned.

In analyzing the data, the researchers initially proposed using a case study approach to summarize the information. However, it became clear that each of the collaboratives had a unique approach and no two communities in Wisconsin are alike. Hence, this document is organized into lessons learned from existing collaboratives. Hopefully, each new community that wants to initiate a collaborative discussion about serving four-year-olds will be able to learn lessons from other communities which have formed public-private partnerships.

The interview process and this summary document are not meant to be evaluative and, therefore, do not identify recommendations for best practices. The document is also not a five step approach to creating a community collaborative. There are many valuable resources available for community collaboratives to learn the "how to's" and "benefits of" engaging in collaboration, some of which are listed in Appendix A .

The document begins in Section I by providing an overview of a community approach to serving four-year-olds. The overview includes the rationale for serving four-year-olds, a description of a community approach, and a discussion of why communities would consider a community approach.

The next two sections represent a compilation of lessons learned from the targeted Wisconsin communities engaged in collaboration around four-year-olds. Section II is the lessons learned about creating community approaches. Section III is lessons learned regarding benefits and challenges of community approaches. The information in these two sections is a summary of the data collected from the community focus group interviews, the completed questionnaires, and a collection of sample documents. At the end of each chapter are bulleted and italicized statements that are taken directly from participant interviews at the focus group sessions.

Appendix A contains resource documents and websites that may be helpful to school districts and communities planning community approaches to serving four-year olds. Appendix B is the list of contact persons for further information about that community's collaborative. Appendix C is sample documents, selected from six of the collaboratives. Also in Appendix C are the focus group questions and background information questionnaire used in gathering data.

# Section I.

## Overview of a Community Approach to Serving Four-Year-Olds

### A. Rationale for serving all four-year-olds

The education of four-year-old children in Wisconsin public schools has gone through many changes. Wisconsin is a leading state in the provision of universally available four-year-old kindergarten programs and may be the only state in which the four-year-old program is directly built into the state school aid formula.

The following list identifies some of the rationale for why Wisconsin supports the education of all four-year-olds:

- Provides children with early learning opportunities that enhance the child's success in school and life.
- Provides access for all four-year-olds in a community. The child does not have to be labeled as low income, a child with a disability or a child-at-risk to be enrolled.
- Brings additional funding to school districts and communities as the state shares in the cost of providing education to four-year-olds.
- Improves quality of educational opportunities through licensed teaching personnel.
- Makes available support services to address special needs: e.g. school nurse, psychologists, and special education services.
- Enhances curriculum through access to special resources and quality-learning materials enhances curriculum: e.g. libraries, art, music, and technology.

As more and more districts begin these programs, strong opinions exist on both sides.: Some favor universal four-year-old kindergarten; others think no four-year-old should be in the traditional public school system; and others think schools can lead quality services for four-year-olds through partnerships with community child care and education programs.

### B. Description of Community Approach

Best practice approaches for universally available four-year-old kindergarten focus on the school-community interface. The new approach is not just the public school expanding educational opportunities for four-year-olds and competing with private sector providers. The community approach is

> *"Communities need to try and stay open and create their own model. Take the time to make it your own."*
>
> La Crosse

a true public – private partnership. In the new approach, collaborations that involve a broad range of community early childhood stakeholders are forged to achieve a common goal which could not be achieved by a single agency acting alone. The new approach works toward the goal of achieving emotional, educational, societal, and physical well-being of children. It treats education and care as if they are two sides of the same coin, not separate entities.

Through cooperation, collaboration, and the sharing of resources, power, information, and authority, collaborators seek to create a new system that will reach all four-year-old children and their families. Their vision outlines a system through which children may be served without being labeled or sorted by eligibility, disability, or income levels.

The players that create the new array of service delivery options for four-year-old children and their families are staff from public schools, private and parochial preschools, Head Start, birth-to-three programs and family support programs; child care providers; and local business people.

Indicators of a blended community approach include:

- Collaborative planning
- Shared governance and a system of accountability
- Use of different funding streams
- Community-based and housed in a variety of settings
- Comprehensive program and services for all four-year-olds
- Staffing patterns that allow for teaming and encourage a career ladder to licensing
- Potential for referrals to other resources and access to comprehensive supports for the child and family.

## C. Why Develop a Community Approach?

Significant inequities exist in early learning opportunities available for young children. Even when early childhood and health and family support services exist, they may not always be affordable, services may be fragmented and inaccessible, and many programs may lack the resources to support qualified staff and to provide effective, quality services.

These inequities create an achievement gap that shows up as students come to school. Public schools and communities look toward four-year-old kindergarten funding as a way to provide early learning opportunities to all four-year-old children.

As public schools began to offer four-year-old programs, some child care providers and preschools were affected by the loss of enrollment. Families and children experienced the effect of fragmented and isolated education and care services. Communities found

that children were experiencing too many transitions from one program to another, and families had difficulty transporting their child from one setting to another and communicating with all of the service providers. In addition, child care providers and education programs sometimes found themselves competing for business.

Communities want to change the isolated, fragmented approach to serving four-year-olds through a blended approach that includes:

- Maximizing existing federal and state funds for child care, Head Start, and schools to allow for greater affordability.
- Keeping the children in one setting
- Improving the quality of services, the child/teacher ratio, the settings, and the number of degreed teachers.
- Improving teacher salaries and work environment, and creating a more stable work force.
- Providing services to support all four-year-olds in Wisconsin and their families, including those staying at home.

> ***"It's been the most exciting thing I have been involved with in a long time!"***
>
> Wausau



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## Section II.

# Creating Community Approaches

Many communities in Wisconsin are transforming their current system of separate care and education services into community approaches. The following is a synopsis of comments and resource documents gathered at the focus group interviews of selected community collaboratives.

Collaborative efforts continuously evolve. The changes they experience over time include inviting potential stakeholders, determining the vision, developing models and methods of operating, and, ultimately, improving the quality of services. This section outlines various aspects that communities in Wisconsin have found to be successful in moving beyond coordination and cooperation to a community approach that utilizes public-private partnership.

## A. Getting Started

Interviewees described many approaches to starting a community collaborative effort. Some described early childhood initiatives dating back to the 1980s. Other communities had false starts, inviting everyone to the discussion, yet had no funding. The size and diversity of the community made a difference in the approach used. All community collaboratives agreed that learning from the experiences of others was helpful, but they also saw the importance of focusing on the unique needs of their community.

> *"It takes courage to come together at the table."*
>
> La Crosse

Some communities started small, talking to one agency at a time; a few invited everyone to the discussions early on. In many communities, school district principals initiated the discussion because they saw a gap among children who had four-year-old experiences and those who did not. Some communities had experienced previously successful collaborative efforts and built on existing birth-to-six councils or Healthy Communities Child Health Action Teams, and added stakeholders.

All communities had a planning group of stakeholders to take advantage of a broad range of perspectives, resources, and expertise of each member. The broad base of stakeholders may include:

- School boards, administrators, principals
- Child care providers – group and family
- Private preschools
- Head Start

> *"From the beginning, invite everyone."*
>
> Portage

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- Parents
- Teachers
- Parochial/private schools
- Child care resource and referral agencies
- Family resource centers and support agencies
- County health organizations
- County human services
- Transportation providers (public and private)
- Businesses

> *"The school validated that we were servicing four- year- olds and that we were doing a good job."*
>
> Portage

**Focus group comments regarding "getting started":**

- *It started with a dream from a Head Start provider who invited parents, child care teachers, and the school district to be part of a planning committee.*
- *The school board came to us and said we want to start this initiative because we believe there are children out there who aren't being served, but we want to be respectful of the child care community.*
- *Bringing all care providers and education providers to the table in the beginning shows the community that we all care about quality services for young children.*
- *The school district held a series of visioning meetings and invited all early childhood stakeholders, including parents.*
- *As a director of a child care facility, I wanted to know that this would be a community effort and not just a school district effort.*
- *Take the time to identify and engage as many potential partners early on, as this will save time in the long run.*
- *Broadening the group of stakeholders to combine resources will maximize service for children and families.*
- *When the partners come together, find the common ground, determine assets, and develop a blended approach for community supports.*

## B. Collaboration Among the Partners

Lessons learned about the actual process of collaborating revolve around the following areas: the benefits of collaboration; building trust with each other; and maintaining relationships, visioning, and developing effective communication with all partners.

> *"Start planning early!"*
>
> Portage





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**The Value of Collaboration**

Individually, each participating partner has an important stake in improving early education and care for young children and brings significant knowledge, experience, and resources to the table. Through cooperation, collaboration, and the sharing of expertise and resources, the partners seek to create a new system that will serve all four-year-old children. In a community approach, partners have found that by collaborating with one another, they improve their ability to provide comprehensive services that they could not possibly have done alone. Whether partners tackle the pressure of scarce resources, making services more accessible and equitable, or decreasing transitions during the day for children and families, the process of collaboration has proven most beneficial.

> ***"After a year of planning and operating – the problems seem less daunting. We have a 'can solve attitude'."***
>
> **Montello**

The success of collaboratives depends upon key community agencies and service providers coming together to initiate the planning process. Once partners begin to establish collaborative relationships and identify partnership activities, some collaboratives have found it purposeful to engage in a visioning process to identify common values, philosophies, and goals for creating a successful collaborative that meets the needs of families and four-year-olds in their community. Partners are more likely to remain involved if their contributions go beyond funding.

**Focus group comments regarding "collaboration and visioning":**

- *Having both public and private administrators working side by side is great for staff and families to see, and essential to the success of the collaborative.*
- *Focus on the vision and the benefits to four-year-olds. Be flexible and compromise on all other issues. Use the vision in contracts, advertising, talking to parents, and hiring staff.*
- *Learn from other communities, and then individualize to create your own model.*
- *Keep the topic of money off the table from the beginning; come back at the point of contracting.*
- *Dealing with reality and still holding on to the ideal that was talked about during the planning stages is difficult. Balancing the ideal with reality requires flexibility.*
- *There will be a disconnect if the vision held at the planning table is not communicated to the staff in the classroom.*
- *Our community wanted to provide universal access for all families. Collaboration was the only way to succeed in this effort.*

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### Building Strong Relationships

Once the partners are assembled, the success of any initiative hinges on the strength of the relationship among partners. When diverse sectors come together it is important to educate partners about differing organizational procedures and guidelines to alleviate potential mistrust and anxiety among participants from the private sector, nonprofit organizations, and public agencies.

**Focus group comments regarding "building trust and maintaining relationships":**

- *Build on the community collaborative relationships that have been established in the past and forge new ones based on trust.*
- *There is synergy within a collaborative approach, the strength of each of the community partners combines with strengths of the other partners. The group is stronger than any one of the partners could be alone.*
- *Allow time for change and be prepared for change. Be sure that all of the partners are informed and everyone thinks about the impact of the change on all partners.*
- *Collaborative partners need to have a willingness to be open to solutions that haven't been thought of yet.*
- *Implementation is more difficult than brainstorming and visioning. Collaboration is not always efficient but it is effective.*
- *Regulations and mandates of public and private agencies can co-exist in collaborative programs.*
- *Trust is built by being respectful and supportive of all private services and public agencies.*
- *In the beginning of the collaborative the communication was more formal, now we trust each other more and are very honest and straight-forward with each other.*

> *"Trust is everything. The only way we did what we did was to believe that everyone was going to do the right thing."*
>
> La Crosse

### Effective Communication

> *"...the ability to ask the hard questions and then to believe what someone is telling you."*
>
> Madison

Collaborative partners found that frank and open communication and joint decision-making are at the core of their collaborative efforts. Partners found the best way to foster effective communication is to establish regular channels of communication (who needs to be included, what mode of communication i.e. internet, how often, etc.), distribute new information in a timely manner, develop a common language, and have regular meetings of stakeholders.



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**Focus group comments regarding "communication":**

- *Encourage each other to speak up about what is best for children. Be direct, say what you think, and expect the same in return.*
- *It takes more time for all staff to communicate and build consensus in a collaborative partnership than if they were working for a single organization.*
- *Staff may get different messages from different sources. Communication lines in all agencies must be coordinated.*
- *The more collaborative programs and sites a community has the more time it takes to communicate among administrators, directors, and staff so that everyone gets the same message.*
- *It is critical that when we speak to the community we understand we are speaking on behalf of the all partners in the collaborative.*

## C. Public Awareness and Community Support

Community perceptions of how and why the community approach was started are important for the future success of the collaboration. It is important to communicate to the community, agency administrators, school boards, and parents that providing quality services focuses on supporting children's learning and not bureaucratic reasons such as a way for the school district to make money.

> ***"We have a positive image in the community."***
>
> **Portage**

It is important to keep families and the public informed since the four-year-old collaborative approach affects the whole community. Using the media and other forms of information dissemination in the community can maintain and expand the community's collaborative efforts. Get support from the community by involving them in information and listening sessions and invite the media to cover these public meetings. Using the media and public forums helps families, businesses, agencies, service providers, and others better understand what a blended system of care and education for four-year-old children is and keeps inaccurate perceptions and assumptions at bay.

**Focus group comments regarding "public awareness and community support":**

- *Publicity in the newspapers about community approaches helps to raise awareness of the importance of care and education for all young children.*
- *We need to respect the diverse values in the community and not super-impose the values of early childhood programming.*
- *Parents and the community need to understand that the need for a collaborative approach originated from the needs of families and their four-year-old children. Child care providers and education services are forming a collaborative to provide those quality services.*

> ***"We have increased our knowledge of early childhood by coming together as a school district and a community."***
>
> **Madison**

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- *Calling services four-year-old programs rather than four-year-old kindergartens dispels the notion that this is about public schools only and that the effort might be to push the existing five-year-old kindergarten curriculum into the four-year-old program.*
- *We need to convey the message that community collaborative programs are developmentally appropriate for four-year-olds and not a watered-down five-year-old kindergarten curriculum.*
- *Family activities and family fun nights provide an outreach opportunity to make other parents in the community aware of the community approach to providing services for four-year-olds.*
- *Negative attitudes in the community about collaborative approaches are difficult to deal with, so it is important to inform the community accurately before there is a chance for a negative image to develop.*

## D. Planning and Decision Making

### Committee Structure

In the planning stages, it is helpful to develop community advisory councils or boards with diverse membership to help develop goals and long-range plans, and to determine programming and partnership agreements. Many collaboratives found that strong leadership from key persons in each partner agency and an effective governance or committee structure are essential for the successful management of the community partnership. Committees may be divided into areas such as curriculum and programming, financial development, operational issues, transportation, family support services, and professional development.

**Focus group comments regarding "planning":**

- *It is helpful to form sub-committees of the larger planning committee to deal with specific issues such as transportation, operations, staff development, etc.*
- *Administrative responsibilities change dramatically when more partners are added to the collaborative.*
- *Addressing differences in standards, funding sources, and expectations is an ongoing issue that requires continued communication and problem solving.*

### Building Consensus

> *"I never left a meeting feeling defeated. I always felt listened to. I felt like what I had to say was important."*
>
> LaCrosse

The process of coming together as a community to collaborate for four-year-olds leads to greater understanding and respect for the diversity of services in the community. Rather than trying to solve problems separately, participants on the team need to bring the issues and challenges to the collaborative table. If there is opposition within or to the collaborative, invite that perspective into the discussion and listen to



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what the person has to say. Collaboratives found that by offering support and encouraging opposing views, the opposition often becomes the greatest supporter of the community approach.

**Focus group comments regarding "reaching consensus":**

- *Face the issue head on by going directly to the source or concern. Listen to everyone. It takes courage to listen to opposing views and be open to new ideas.*
- *The number one priority is to have a win-win situation for all services in the community.*
- *People with opposing views can come together, have many discussions, overcome conflict, be creative in finding solutions, and, ultimately, become partners who focus on what is best for children.*
- *Share your thoughts because one little piece that is said could be the important solution the group is searching for. We can deal with surprises because we believe that we can always find a solution.*
- *Takes a lot of time to come to consensus around a problem or solution because of the number of agencies and services involved.*

**Partnership Agreement and Contracts**

> *"Collaboration isn't always efficient but it is effective."*
>
> Eau Claire

Many partnerships create written plans that include the roles and responsibilities of each partner, facility requirements, program standards, funding mechanisms, transportation, and meal services. Some use contracts or memoranda of understanding to define various responsibilities. All partners must have meaningful roles in order to sustain their commitment and involvement.

Examples of contracts and written partnership agreements for the communities of Montello, Madison, and Portage are in Appendix B.

## E. Delivery Models and Staffing Patterns

**Delivery Models**

> *"The quality of programming will improve and it will strengthen our early childhood system."*
>
> Madison

Community approaches for four-year-olds provide a variety of flexible service options in response to the specific needs of children and families. Families can choose the model that is the best match for the needs of their child and family. Choices span the entire spectrum from no service to half-day or full-day services. Services include education only, care only, or a combination of education and care. Sites include public school and community sites such as Head Start, child care, and private preschools. The communities range from having one early learning center in a small community to

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having sixteen sites in a larger community. Some communities offer two models for four-year-old programs while others offer five or more models.

The communities offer a parent involvement program in addition to providing classroom instruction for the child. Parents are involved in activities such as parent education, support groups, home visits, parent and teacher conferences, classroom involvement, input into developing programs, advisory groups, volunteer opportunities, and other events for parents. *Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction Policy and Information Advisory 02.1, Four-Year-Old Kindergarten,* February 2002 states, "To receive 0.5 in membership aid, a district must operate a program a minimum of 437 hours per year (175 days times 2.5 hours per day). Of that time, 87.5 hours (20 percent) of the 437 hours may be used for outreach activities for the school staff to link to the child's primary caregiver." Both the WDPI and the communities who are providing services for four-year olds value the importance of involving parents as partners in the education of young children.

Communities involved in this project each had their own program options or delivery models. The decision to choose specific program options is based on the needs of the children and families within that particular community. The following models represent the variety of services that are provided to four-year-old children within the seven communities:

***School Site***

- Child attends four-year-old kindergarten 2.5 hours each day at the school site.
- Child attends four-year-old kindergarten and extended education or care programming at the school site; each program is 2.5 hours.
- Child attends four-year-old kindergarten at the school site for 2.5 hours and goes to community site for child care.

***Community Site with School District Teacher***

- Child attends a community site (Head Start, child care, preschool) and receives four-year-old program for 2.5 hours each day. Public school teacher works within existing part-day or full-day community early childhood site. Family may choose to have the child attend the community program for the remainder of the day.

***Community Site with a Licensed Pre-K Teacher***

- Child attends a community site (Head Start, child care, preschool) and receives the four-year-old program for 2.5 hours each day. Community site provides the WDPI-licensed teacher. Family may choose to have the child attend the community program for the remainder of the day. School district contracts with the community site on a per child basis.

*At-Home Educational Support*

- Child is not attending programs in the school or community. If their parents are interested, the community collaborative can offer child development and parenting materials such as activity booklets that describe how to do the activity, what the child is learning by doing the activity, and also includes songs and nursery rhymes. Parents may also be invited to attend parenting workshops, support groups, and family learning nights sponsored by the program. Community programs can also be connected to existing family resource centers, parent education programs, and/or support organizations.

Several of the communities involved in the project are phasing in four-year-old programs. They are beginning with one or two programs locals in selected community based sites and are planning to expand to more models and more sites within the next several years.

**Focus group comments regarding "program models":**

- *Wrap-around services such as care and education programs provided in the same environment allow for fewer transitions for children and their families.*
- *A range of services is available to support families that includes parent education, adult education, and family literacy.*
- *Families have choice of models and can choose whether to enroll or not enroll their child in a four-year-old program.*

**Staffing Patterns**

> ***"Hire wisely."***
>
> **Montello**

Well-prepared staff are critical to the success of providing a quality learning experience for four-year-old children. Teachers in four-year-old kindergarten must hold a kindergarten license (e.g.,#80 prekindergarten; #90 PK-K; #83 PK-3; # 100 kindergarten etc., see WDPI licensing in Appendix A the prekindergarten, prekindergarten - grade 3. *Early Childhood Professional Development Roads to a License to Teach 4-Year Old Kindergarten – Appendix A.*) All staff in the partnership need to possess knowledge of normal child development and developmentally appropriate practice. Many of the community collaborative classrooms support team teaching, provide additional adult support, and include community volunteers such as parents, grandparents, and high school students. Partners report that it is important for staff in the collaborative to share similar philosophies and beliefs regarding teaching and learning.

Many of the community collaboratives have established maximum class size and adult/child ratios. Several of the collaboratives recommend a class size of 18 with a 1:10 adult/child ratio. Many of the collaboratives have lower than 1:10 adult/child ratios due to the fact that support staff is hired and parents are encouraged to volunteer in the classroom.

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All of the collaboratives have one or more coordinators for their community collaborative four-year-old programs. One of the communities is seeking to hire an Early Childhood Outreach Liaison. These positions coordinate the development of early childhood outreach programs for the district, implement the preschool programs, develop early childhood literacy programs at all elementary schools, support the inclusion of special needs children in day care settings, assist with staff and parent education programs, assist with preschool implementation, and assist with communication regarding grant funding.

**Focus group comments regarding "staff":**

- *Hire staff that philosophically supports the mission and vision of the collaborative approach.*
- *At times it is difficult for the whole staff to work through differences in philosophy to come to consensus about the meaning of quality services for children.*
- *Learning from each other, sharing knowledge and ideas, understanding each other's standards, and supporting one another are benefits to all administrators and staff involved in the partnership.*
- *New staff do not always understand the philosophy of the existing collaborative approach.*

## F. Program Standards and Curriculum

### Program Standards

One or more of the following program standards are implemented in the community collaborative four-year-old programs:

- Department of Health and Family Services licensing standards
- WDPI state standards and regulations
- Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA)
- Head Start performance standards
- National Association of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation standards
- National Association of Young Children (NAEYC) program standards

Many of the community collaboratives have developed local standards and benchmarks based on the standards and benchmarks recommended by the National Association of Young Children (NAEYC), WDPI Academic Standards, and Head Start Performance Standards. The local standards and benchmarks guide the curriculum. Several of the communities include statements regarding standards and curriculum in their partnership agreements. See samples in Appendix B.

**Curriculum**

The curriculum of the community collaboratives strives to be developmentally appropriate, with a focus on language experience, social competence, and active, exploratory learning. Community collaborative curriculums follow developmentally appropriate practice guidelines established by the NAEYC for young children birth to age eight. Learning experiences are age appropriate, individually appropriate and culturally appropriate. Teachers provide learning environments and experiences that allow children to become actively engaged in their own learning. Curriculum is sensitive and flexible in order to meet the needs of the diverse population of children, families, and communities.

> ***"It takes courage to speak from the heart about what is best for children...and courage to listen."***
>
> **La Crosse**

Community partners consistently cited the example of flexibility in program and curricular development to maintain the integrity and uniqueness of the individual organization /preschool program as long as the standards and benchmarks listed above guide the curriculum. Some communities select a standard curriculum such as the *Creative Curriculum, High Scope,* or *Work Sample Analysis.*

The four-year-old curriculum includes the following areas of development:

- Social/emotional
- Daily living
- Language/literacy
- Creative expression
- Representation
- Movement

**Focus group comments regarding "program standards and curriculum":**

- *The collaborative partners are able to develop common standards and expectations for young children through joint planning and problem solving which leads to improved services for children.*
- *Merging program philosophy, standards. and curriculum·is sometimes difficult for staff in collaborative partnerships.*
- *Developing one policy to deal with the differences in agency policy standards is helpful to the participating agencies. For example, developing a policy using the highest standard of any one of the collaborative partners would be the standard used within the collaborative program. The policy would address situations such as adult/child ratio, air quality levels, staff eating with children, etc.*

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## G. Sharing Resources

### Funding Mechanisms

> *"We kept money off the table from the beginning."*
>
> La Crosse

When community private and public partnerships are formed, blended funding streams can be utilized to support integrated quality services for four-year-old children. The community approaches blend their funding sources to provide services. The public schools receive state equalization aid to fund four-year-old programs. Other public school funding sources for four-year-olds include: Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act; Even Start Family Literacy; and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Wisconsin Head Start funding comes directly from the U.S. Department Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. The state also funds local Head Start programs through a combination of general-purpose revenues and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families Fund. State funding is administered by the WDPI.

Wisconsin child care programs are funded through a combination of federal, state dollars, and parent fees. The federal dollars come from the Department of Health and Human Services through the Child Care Development Fund and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families Fund. This money supports the Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy program (refer to Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners website, Appendix A).

The communities involved in the project used one or more of the following blended funding sources:

- Public school funding with Head Start funding.
- Public school funding with child care federal and state funding, and parent fees.
- Public school funding with private preschool parent fees.

Several communities reported that they received federal Pass-Through Grants to support the improvement of child care in the community. Other grant funding provides high quality professional development for all collaborative partners within the community. Head Start, public school, child care, and private preschool teachers come together to attend joint training.

Many communities discussed the importance of having stable funding sources for all community, public, and private services. Each partner should budget and plan well in advance of starting each year. The amount of space, number of staff, materials,





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transportation and other services to four-year-old children depend upon funding sources.

**Transportation**

Public schools must have district transportation policies. According to Wisconsin law, "a pupil attending a public elementary or secondary school, including four-and five-year-old kindergarten, is entitled to transportation by the public school district in which the pupil resides if the pupil resides two or more miles from the nearest public school the pupil is entitled to attend. Because transportation to and from school is required, the school district is responsible for transportation to and from half-day kindergarten programs as well as full-day kindergarten programs." (Derse, Larson, Haglund, WDPI Letter, 9/20/02, Appendix A).

> ***"Focus on kids; Give up turf; Divide up the work; Celebrate more!"***
>
> **La Crosse**

Many Head Start programs currently provide transportation for children to and from class. Parents typically provide transportation to and from child care based on their required hours of care. Communities found that coordination and co-location of four-year old kindergarten and child care reduced the need for transportation and found that sharing transportation costs for four-year-olds is a great benefit.

**Space, Equipment, and Materials**

Sharing space is advantageous for collaborative partners. Many school districts reported that it would be very difficult to serve all the four-year-olds in the community if they needed to serve them all within the public school due to space limitations. The school districts reported that being able to share space with child care facilities, preschools, and Head Starts has reduced transitions for four-year-olds and is a wise use of school district financial resources.

Community collaboratives reported that sharing equipment, books, toys, and other materials has also been a financial benefit to each of the partners. Children benefit by having well-equipped classrooms and quality consumable supplies. Schools may provide additional funds to supplement community program funds further enhancing materials and equipment available.

**Professional Development**

The staff in a collaborative need to be experienced and well trained. Because the team is working together everyday, they need to also come together on a regular basis to share learning, knowledge, and experiences. The community partners share access to each organization's professional development. Staff development topics are focused on meeting the needs of early childhood teachers relative to curriculum and other goals of

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the community collaborative. The basic goal of professional development is for participants to acquire new knowledge and apply it to their practice to improve services for children.

**Focus group comments regarding "sharing resources":**

- *Public school personnel do not usually think about their work in terms of a business, however, with a collaborative approach all participants need to think about the service they provide from the vantage point of all of the partners.*
- *Collaborative partnerships are successful because the partners can combine public and private funding sources during times when funding sources are declining.*
- *Child cares and preschools can use the money they receive from the collaborative effort for staff salaries, supplies, and materials.*
- *Pooling resources for joint staff development allows all staff to receive quality, concentrated, and focused training. Professional development has been improved as a result of combining resources.*

> ***"Pull back and be willing to be flexible!"***
>
> Eau Claire



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# Section III.

## Benefits and Challenges of Community Approaches

Collaborative partners in Wisconsin have learned many lessons about the benefits and challenges of community approaches. They are identified in this section.

### A. Benefits to children and families

Community approaches provide a family-friendly environment that unifies care and education services for the child and the family. Through a four-year-old community approach, the child and family services are no longer fragmented and duplicated. Focus group participants made the following statements concerning benefits to four-year-old children and their families.

> ***"There are fewer transitions for kids."***
>
> **Madison**

**Benefits to both children and families:**

- *Parents have one place to take their children for care and education and consequently children have fewer transitions between different locations.*
- *Wrap-around services in one setting increase the opportunity for parents, care providers, and education providers to communicate with each other about the child's developmental learning and the support strategies for children with special needs.*

**Benefits to children:**

- *The four-year-old program is universal and is not based on any other eligibility factors such as ability, disability, family income, or ethnic background which means that all four-year-old children can participate.*
- *All four-year-olds are receiving a quality preschool experience taught by a WDPI licensed early childhood teacher.*
- *Children in our community who have attended four-year-old preschool programs are more likely to succeed, especially in the areas of language and social development, than those children who are not attending the four-year-old programs.*
- *Assessment results are showing that children with disabilities who are integrated into community four-year-old programs are making progress as a result of having normal peer models.*
- *More children are being referred earlier for additional services due to the interaction among professionals in a community collaborative approach.*
- *Children who live in poverty and previously had no access to four-year-old programs now participate in the community collaborative.*

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**Benefits to families:**

- *Families are working together as partners with the child care and education service providers.*
- *Families have the choice of program options, location, and schedule, or to keep their child at home.*
- *Families who previously could not afford to send their children to a preschool now can.*
- *Families are introduced to conferencing with public school teachers earlier when their child is age four.*
- *Collaborative efforts of the Head Start, public school, child cares, and preschools in the community provide opportunities for families to communicate and learn through parent education, family fun nights, nutrition services, family literacy, and English as a Second Language classes.*

## B. Benefits to Community Partners

The community collaboratives discovered many advantages and benefits to forming partnerships. The partners found that they could put aside their individual agendas and blend services in order to achieve their common goal of providing quality comprehensive services to children and families in the community. They found that their partnerships provided benefits and opportunities for each other that would not have occurred if services were offered in isolation. Some of the greatest benefits for partners are shared leadership, pooling of resources, and the sharing of responsibility for accomplishments. The community collaborative partners identified the following benefits:

**Benefits to All Community Partners:**

- *Collaborative partnerships are successful because the partners can combine public and private funding sources during times when funding sources are declining.*

> *"The biggest success was that it happened at all."*
>
> LaCrosse

- *Administrators and staff involved can benefit from the partnership by learning from each other, sharing knowledge and ideas, understanding each other's standards, and supporting one another.*
- *Existing collaborative partnerships can pave the way for additional grant funding targeted for future collaborative ventures.*
- *Collaboratives provide a level of quality services that would not be possible for any one agency to do by themselves because partners are dependent upon one another for finances, resources, materials, staff, space, etc.*
- *Barriers between the agencies are broken down in an effort to form partnerships.*
- *Cooperative Education Service Agency staff assist the collaborating partners to eliminate the duplication of completing forms and paperwork for the individual agencies and for families.*

**Benefits to Public Schools**

- *Administrators, school board members, and staff are engaging in conversations for the first time regarding early education for all children, not just for children with disabilities or children who are at-risk.*
- *Teachers of five-year-old kindergarten report that the transition process into school is easier for children who have attended the four-year-old program.*
- *Administrators, school board members, and staff understand and support the idea of providing the option of four-year-old kindergarten programming because it is good for children and is cost effective.*

**Benefits to Child Care Providers**

> *"School validated that we were servicing fours and that we were doing a good job!"*
>
> Portage

- *Public school system honors the work of other agencies providing services to four-year-olds in the community by validating what they do and inviting them to be collaborative partners.*
- *Children with disabilities can receive services from the public schools within the child care, preschool, and Head Start program.*
- *Locating a four-year-old program within the child care or preschool facility often maintains or increases the enrollment of the child care and preschool facility as a result of the collaborative partnership.*
- *The child care and preschool staff benefit from the opportunity to partner with a licensed teacher to deliver a quality curriculum to the children.*
- *Collaborating with public schools allowed the private preschools to do free marketing.*
- *Parents who had four-year-old children enrolled in community preschools began to enter younger siblings, which created a good mix of all age groups at the preschool.*
- *Private preschools' ability to provide four-year-old services for free or at a reduced cost increased the diversity of students they typically enroll.*
- *Referrals to the county birth to 3 programs increased because child care facilities, preschools, and Head Start are more aware of the service provided by the birth to 3 program.*

## C. Challenges to Success

The challenges to success are placed at the end of this document because challenges can either help the community collaborative solidify and strengthen its identity or cause it to break apart. Collaborative partners need sufficient time to become inclusive and trusting before they can tackle certain issues. Imagining possibilities and experimenting together often precedes the actual implementation of a coordinated program. The implementation phase may bring a new set of

> *"Drive slowly over bumps!"*
>
> Wausau

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challenges and highlight the need for a new problem-solving paradigm. When the relationship of the partners is sufficient in breath, depth, and connectedness, challenges become new opportunities and a source of growth for the partners. The following are the challenges that surfaced in some of the community collaboratives.

**Getting Started**

> *"Patience, perseverance, and process are important."*
>
> Eau Claire

- *There are many child care providers in the community and therefore many voices with a variety of opinions regarding collaborative approaches.*
- *We are missing views from law enforcement, elderly, faith-based, pediatricians, employers, business, and legislators.*
- *Some agencies and service providers are not at the table. It is difficult to determine who should be invited to the table and make everyone feel included.*

**Collaboration Among the Partners**

- *The integrity of the program and services to children and families is affected by staff's ability to successfully work together.*
- *It takes more time for all staff to communicate and build consensus in a collaborative partnership than if they were working for a single organization.*
- *Coordinating transportation of children to community collaborative programs is time consuming and difficult to arrange due to agency policies and budget constraints.*
- *Some communities would not continue their collaborative efforts if it were not for the funding for four-year-old kindergarten that they receive from the WDPI.*
- *Some parents still have to choose between Head Start and the district four –year-old program because collaboration between the two organizations does not exist.*

> *"Collaborations take a lot of work! But the benefits far outweigh the drawbacks."*
>
> Montello

**Public Awareness and Building Community Support**

- *Some child care providers and preschools do not think there are enough four-year-olds to go around to feed all the existing and new programs. If not in a collaborative partnership, these providers may suffer from a lack of business.*
- *Some child care providers think that the current child care programs and preschools are already meeting the needs of four-year-olds and do not see a need to provide additional services to four-year-olds.*
- *There are concerns about our image in the community and what would happen without state funding for the four-year-old programs.*
- *A state professional association appears to be threatened and is lobbying against four-year-old district programs.*



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- *Some staff are concerned about the future of Head Start funding and who will be the lead state agency for Head Start.*

**Planning and Decision Making**

- *Some child care providers see public schools as having all of the power -- "the big bad school" -- and child care providers having no power to challenge the school district.*

**Delivery Models and Staffing Patterns**

- *We need to understand and better address the needs of families and children of poverty. Do we bring services to them rather than have them come to us?*
- *Some families and children cannot take advantage of four-year-old programs due to enrollment limits at some sites.*
- *Lack of available transportation may cause enrollment problems such as having too many students or capped enrollment at one site and not enough students at another site.*
- *Parents are concerned about their young children riding the bus. They worry about the amount of time the child spends riding on the bus, riding with older students, and other safety issues.*
- *Child care workers who are licensed teachers may leave their positions in the child care agency to take a better-paying job in the public school.*

> ***"Problems are opportunities. Sometimes problems are what push us to look for creative solutions that we couldn't have imagined without them."***
>
> Eau Claire

**Program Standards and Curriculum**

- *Head Start policies for number of hours/day and food service are not the same as public school policies for hours/days, food service, etc.*
- *Merging program philosophy, standards, and curriculum is difficult for some staff in collaborative partnerships.*
- *Expectations of staff responsibilities become an issue when the expectations of staff are different within each of the agencies represented in the collaborative. For example, cleaning the room and facilities may be expected of staff in one agency but not in another agency.*

**Sharing Resources**

- *Additional staff and financial support may be needed to provide services to multiple sites/programs. School support staff such as school psychologists, nurses, speech/language pathologists, occupational and physical therapists, and audiologists need to travel to multiple sites to provide services rather than deliver services in school district sites only.*

> ***"As we hit roadblocks, we asked questions and got more information."***
>
> Eau Claire

- *Four-year-old children who are enrolled in a child care program in one community but who are not residents of the local school district cannot receive the same services that resident four-year old children receive.*
- *The facilities, services, and environment of some*

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*collaborative partners are better than others.*

- *In collaboratives that include Head Start partners, the school districts need to decide if they will pay for breakfast, snack, and lunch for district four-year-old children who don't qualify for Head Start, or if parents will be charged for food.*
- *Charging tuition for programming beyond the 2.5 hours is a problem for families who cannot pay. Some children would not be able to participate based on the level of income of their parents.*
- *Lack of guaranteed funding in the future may cause school districts to combine services with other school districts in the county.*
- *Some child care centers and preschools are worried about loss of enrollment, which could lead to closing their business.*
- *The concern for continued funding for four-year-old programs causes some collaboratives to make decisions about expanding partnerships to include all children.*
- *Wage compensation for staff is not equal within collaboratives. For example, public school unionized teachers receive the wage commensurate with the public school and the other collaborating partners receive wages commensurate with the providers in child care, preschool or Head Start programs.*

> ***"Lessons are about giving up "my way" and "finding the best way."***
>
> Wausau

## D. Summary of Benefits and Challenges

The existing Wisconsin communities interviewed learned many lessons on their journey from inception to implementation. The most important of which is that if you start with a group of interested individuals who are able to build consensus around common beliefs and vision then anything is possible, their passion infuses a can-do attitude. There is no doubt that many of the communities faced challenging issues along the way, but for every challenge there was new learning and new opportunities for success in the delivery of quality services to four-year-old children and their families. Their view of including all in the planning phase of the collaborative helped break many of the traditional barriers to success when a community starts a new program. Instead of competition and divisiveness that often occurs with new initiatives or scarce resources, we found communities that are collaborating for the benefit of young children and their families.

> ***"Go slowly, plan thoroughly, act jointly, and celebrate collaboratively."***
>
> Wausau

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# Appendix A

## Resources


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Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction 4-year-old kindergarten home page
http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dlcl/bbfcsp/ec4yrpag.html

*Working to Transform Early Childhood Education and Care.* Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners. Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. (2001). Madison, WI: Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners.
http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/docs/WECCPReport

## Related Web Sites

Head Start Performance Standards:
www.head-start.lane.or.us/administration/regulations/45CFR130x.index.html

National Association for the Education of Young Children
http://www.naeyc.org

Wisconsin Day Care Licensing Rules:
http://nrc.uchsc.edu/states.html

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction early childhood homepage DPI web site: map of school districts with four-year-old programs
http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dlcl/bbfcsp/echildhm.html

Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners web site:
http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dlcl/bbfcsp/eccopthm.html
http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/
http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/docs/agenda_wecp.pdf

# Appendix B

## Contacts for Existing Wisconsin Community Approaches:

**EAU CLAIRE**
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**LA CROSSE**
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Early Childhood Community Liaison
Family Resources
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**MADISON**
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Elementary Lead Principal
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**MILWAUKEE**
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Coordinator Box 2181
Milwaukee Public Schools
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Milwaukee, WI 53208.
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terrelam@mail.milwaukee.k12.wi.us

**MONTELLO**
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CAP Services, Inc. Head Start
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Email: kschouten@capmail.org

**PORTAGE**
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Portage Community School District
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Portage, WI 53901
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**WAUSAU**
Julie Burmesch, Coordinator
Wausau School District Preschool
Collaboration Programs
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Wausau, WI 54401
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# Appendix C

The following documents can be found on these web sites:
http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dlcl/bbfcsp/ec4yrpag.html
http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/

## Sample Documents from Wisconsin Community Approaches

**EAU CLAIRE**
- Eau Claire's Early Learning Initiative for All Four-Year-Olds: Questions and Answers
- Eau Claire's Early Learning Initiative: Vision and Values

**LA CROSSE**
- LaCrosse Programs for Young Children: Operations & Delivery Models (2/15/00)
- LaCrosse Programs for Young Children: Program/Service Indicators for Improving Services for Children and Families

**MADISON**
- Madison Community Early Learning Initiative: Service Delivery Options
- Madison ELI Application of Interest to Become a Partnering Agency for 2003-2004
- 4 Year Old Kindergarten ELI Phase I – *Questions and Answers* (12/02)

**MONTELLO**
- Montello Early Learning Center: Partnership Agreement between Head Start and Montello School District (2002-03)

**PORTAGE**
- Community Collaboration for Four Year Olds – Vision and Belief Statements

**WAUSAU**
- Wausau Preschool Collaboration: Standards and Benchmarks

## Wisconsin Forces for Four-Year-Olds Project Documents

*Community Collaborative Background Information Questions*. Wisconsin Forces for Four Year Olds Project. (Fall 2002) Madison, WI.

*Focus Group Questions*. Wisconsin Forces for Four Year Olds Project. (Fall 2002) Madison, WI.

# Eau Claire's Early Learning Initiative for All Four-Year-Olds

## Questions and Answers

### What is this I hear about the Eau Claire community possibly creating a new program for all four-year-olds?

Representatives of the Eau Claire community have had preliminary discussions to determine if Eau Claire would be supportive of a half-day early learning program open to all four-year-olds in the community.

### Who has taken part in these discussions?

For the past year, representatives from the following groups have been meeting to discuss the feasibility of four-year-old programming: parents, child care/preschool programs, University of Wisconsin Extension, Eau Claire Area School District, Family Resource Center, Child Care Resource and Referral Agency, Head Start, and family in-home providers. Additionally, Jim McCoy, a long-time early childhood consultant for the Department of Public Instruction has provided direction for the group.

### Why are these discussions important?

To ensure that all four-year-olds in our community have access to a comprehensive quality early learning experience.

### How could these programs be delivered?

The new universally-available early learning program for four-year-olds could be built in cooperation with child care centers which are currently serving four-year-olds. The new system could involve a public-private partnership based on values of equity and universal access within a decentralized delivery system. Proposed program options include sites both in elementary schools and in community settings (child care and Head Start). It is also expected that learning resources could be made available to families who choose to keep their four-year-olds at home.

## Is there more than one model for this program?

In a word, yes. That is why so many people need to be involved in the feasibility planning process. This new system can only be created through community collaboration. In order for this system to have the needed flexibility to optimize a program for all four-year-olds, adults will need to work in teams, with mutual trust and support for a shared vision.

## Where would the funding come from for this four-year-old program?

Funding would primarily come from state membership aid for four-year-old kindergarten (the basis for the term 4K). The state aid for 4K is the same as the state aid for half-day five-year-old kindergarten. Efforts to make up the difference between anticipated costs and state funding would be needed. It is important to note that a program for all four-year-olds, if approved, could be called whatever the community wishes but the statutory and funding terminology is "kindergarten for four-year-olds."

## Do other communities in Wisconsin have 4K programming?

Yes. Currently 136 of the 430 school districts in Wisconsin have a 4K program which is open to all the age-eligible four-year-olds. Another 50 districts are actively studying the possibility. While there has been a rather rapid expansion of 4K programs in Wisconsin over the past ten years, it is of interest to note that several districts in the Milwaukee area have had 4K for nearly a century.

## Are other communities in Wisconsin using this public/private approach?

Yes, a few. Milwaukee has operated a 4K program for many years. Children in child care centers have received a public school kindergarten program without having to leave their center. La Crosse was the first Wisconsin community to build its entire 4K program on a public-private partnership.

## What comes next?

After the community discussions, a representative group will make a determination of community support for recommendations as to proceed or not to proceed with the development of a four-year-old program.

10/02

# Eau Claire's Early Learning Initiative for All Four-Year-Olds

The Community Collaboration for All Four-Year-Olds is an initiative designed to explore the possibility of a voluntary four-year-old preschool program and to facilitate its development within the geographical area of the Eau Claire Area School District.

## Purpose

The purpose of a voluntary four-year-old preschool program is to provide every child and family in our community access to a blended comprehensive system of high quality early childhood education and care. The program will focus on early literacy, language experience, social competence, and self-confidence in an environment that helps children grow as individuals. Active, exploratory learning is encouraged and supported by a team of early childhood professionals.

## Vision Statement

All four-year-olds in our community have access to a quality early learning experience.

## Values

For a collaborative early learning system to operate successfully...

- The design and delivery of programming may vary to meet community needs, but must have uniformly adequate and equitable **funding** to assure quality services for all children and families.
- It must **enhance and extend** existing early education and care, including child care, Head Start, public school, and community services.
- It must offer **comprehensive services** which include family support and education, resource and referral, and ongoing assessment.
- Families must have the **opportunity to choose** among various program options.
- It must include a **professional development** system based on a comprehensive, coordinated framework of preservice and continuing education opportunities for professionals in all early childhood settings.
- It must ensure **access** to all children, including those with special needs.
- It must reflect and honor the **diversity** within children, families, and the community.
- It must support **consistent** education and care, while minimizing transitions for children.

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# LaCrosse Community Collaboration for Four Year Olds

## OPERATIONS

All models have the potential of having services available from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Parents can select those services that best fit their needs.

### Model I: Public School Staff / School Site

- 2-1/2 hr. preschool (12-1/2 hrs/wk) during school year
- Head Start option for 4 hrs.
- Wrap around child care for four-year olds by non-district staff year round
- Option to enroll by Sept. 1st non-district four-year olds through WI Open Enrollment
- Collaboration Team comprised of all partners.

### Model II: Public School Staff / Partnering Agency Site

- 2-1/2 hr. preschool (12-1/2 hrs/wk) during school year
- Head Start option for 4 hrs.
- Unlimited ages for child care
- Option to enroll by Sept. 1st non-district four-year olds through WI Open Enrollment
- Preschool targeted for four-year-olds
- Collaboration Team comprised of all partners.

### Model III: Contracted Program / Partnering Agency Site

- 2-1/2 hr. preschool (12-1/2 hrs/wk) during school year
- Head Start option for 4 hrs.
- Unlimited ages for child care
- Option to enroll by Sept. 1st non-district four-year-olds through WI Open Enrollment
- Would allow multi-age preschool
- More flexibility in class size
- Collaboration Team comprised of all partners.

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## LOCATION/FACILITIES

- Where space allows and demand exists
- Four-year-old "friendly"- appropriate environments
- Space available as needed 6 a.m.- 6 p.m.
- Storage
- Outdoor/indoor play space and equipment appropriate for early childhood
- Space for support services and parents
- Handicap accessible

- Where space allows and demand exists
- Four-year-old "friendly"-appropriate environments
- Space available as needed 6 a.m.-6 p.m.
- Storage
- Outdoor/indoor play space and equipment appropriate for early childhood
- Space for support services and parents
- As required by state licensing
- Handicap accessible

- Where space allows and demand exists
- Four-year-old "friendly"- appropriate environments
- Space available as needed 6 a.m.-6 p.m.
- Storage
- Outdoor/indoor play space and equipment appropriate for early childhood
- Space for support services and parents
- As required by state licensing
- Handicap accessible

## STAFF

Partnering agencies and staffing will vary according to the sites involved.

### Model I: Public School Staff, School Site

- DPI certified for preschool
- Teacher assistants with HS diploma and early childhood experience preferred
- Option: Head Start teachers
- Option: Child care teachers for wrap around services
- 18 students to 1 teacher and 1 TA for four-year-old preschool
- Site Coordinator
- Joint training and professional development
- Program Collaboration Coordinator

### Model II: Public School Staff, Partnering Agency Site

- DPI certified for preschool
- Teacher assistants with HS diploma and early childhood experience preferred

  OR

  Teacher assistants with HS diploma, early childhood experience preferred and EC I
- Option: Head Start Teachers
- Option: Child care teachers for wrap around services
- Program Collaboration Coordinator
- 18 students to 1 teacher and 1 TA for four-year-old preschool
- Site Coordinator
- Joint training and professional development
- Meets minimum licensing requirements

### Model III: Contracted Program, Partnering Agency Site

- DPI certified for preschool and/or kindergarten
- Teacher assistants with HS diploma, early childhood experience preferred and EC I
- Option: Head Start Teachers
- Option: Child care teachers for wrap around services
- 18 students to 1 teacher and 1 TA for four-year-old preschool
- Program Collaboration Coordinator
- Site Coordinator
- Joint training and professional development
- Meets minimum licensing requirements



## ACTIVITIES/CURRICULUM

- Developmentally appropriate preschool model for four-year-olds
- Classrooms are not segregated by program type, family income, or child's ability/disability
- Cultural/family values are incorporated

- Developmentally appropriate preschool model for four-year-olds
- Classrooms are not segregated by program type, family income, or child's ability/disability
- Cultural/family values are incorporated

- Developmentally appropriate preschool model for four-year-olds
- Classrooms are not segregated by program type, family income, or child's ability/disability
- Cultural/family values are incorporated

## FUNDING

The preschool component in all models will be publicly funded and at no cost to individuals. Distribution of funds will vary for each model.

| Model I: Public School Staff<br>School Site | Model II: Public School Staff<br>Partnering Agency Site | Model III: Contracted Program<br>Partnering Agency Site |
|---|---|---|
| • State funding<br>• District budget<br>• Head Start<br>• Special Education<br>• Federal funding<br>• Grants<br>• Child care subsidies<br>• Parent fees for services outside of preschool program. | • State funding<br>• District budget<br>• Head Start<br>• Special Education<br>• Federal funding<br>• Grants<br>• Child care subsidies<br>• Parent fees for services outside of preschool program | • State funding<br>• District budget<br>• Head Start<br>• Special Education<br>• Federal funding<br>• Grants<br>• Child care subsidies<br>• Parent fees for outside of preschool program |

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

| Model I: Public School Staff School Site | Model II: Public School Staff Partnering Agency Site | Model III: Contracted Program Partnering Agency Site |
|---|---|---|
| • Parent Education workshops, support groups, home visits, family nights, P/T conferences, orientation, etc. for minimum of 87.5 hrs. | • Parent Education workshops, support groups, home visits, family nights, P/T conferences, orientation, etc. for minimum of 87.5 hrs. | • Parent Education workshops, support groups, home visits, family nights, P/T conferences, orientation, etc. for minimum of 87.5 hrs. |
| • School Site Team includes preschool representation | • Parent Advisory and/or Governance | • Parent Advisory and/or Governance |
| • Volunteers | • Volunteers | • Volunteers |
| • Parents have direct role in planning student's educational program and care | • Parents have direct role in planning student's educational program and care | • Parents have direct role in planning student's educational program and care |



## SUPPORT SERVICES

These will vary depending on the availability of services at each site.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| • Nursing services | • Nursing services | • Nursing services |
| • Vision & hearing screening | • Vision & hearing screening | • Vision & hearing screening |
| • Immunization recordkeeping | • Immunization recordkeeping | • Immunization recordkeeping |
| • Information on health & safety | • Information on health & safety | • Information on health & safety |
| • Food Service (USDA) breakfast, lunch, snack | • Food Service (USDA) breakfast, lunch, snack | • Food Service (USDA) breakfast, lunch snack |
| • Nutrition education | • Nutrition education | • Nutrition education |
| • Special education integrated | • Special Education integrated | • Special education integrated |
| • Counseling | • Counseling | • Counseling |
| • Social work | • Social work | • Social work |
| • Psychology | • Psychology | • Psychology |
| • Transportation within regular school hours | • Transportation within regular school hours | • Transportation within regular school hours |
| • English for Speakers of Other Languages | • English for Speakers of Other Languages | • English for Speakers of Other Languages |

## PARTNERING AGENCIES

Partners remain the same, however, level of involvement for each agency varies from model to model.

| Model I: Public School Staff<br>School Site | Model II: Public School Staff<br>Partnering Agency Site | Model III: Contracted Program<br>Partnering Agency Site |
|---|---|---|
| Education/Care:<br>• Head Start<br>• Child Care Providers<br>• School District<br>• Private Preschool<br>Support Services:<br>• County Health Services<br>• Family Resources<br>• County Human Services<br>• Private and public transportation providers<br>• CESA 4<br>• Post-secondary institutions<br>• Wisconsin Job Center-La Crosse | Education/Care:<br>• Head Start<br>• Child Care Providers<br>• School District<br>• Private Preschool<br>Support Services:<br>• County Health Services<br>• Family Resources<br>• County Human Services<br>• Nutrition Programming<br>• Private and public transportation providers<br>• CESA 4<br>• Post-secondary institutions<br>• Wisconsin Job Center-La Crosse | Education/Care:<br>• Head Start<br>• Child Care Providers<br>• School District<br>• Private Preschool<br>Support Services:<br>• County Health Services<br>• Family Resources<br>• County Human Services<br>• Nutrition Programming<br>• Private and public transportation providers<br>• CESA 4<br>• Post-secondary institutions<br>• Wisconsin Job Center-La Crosse |



## STANDARDS

These will be important when developing contracts with partners.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| • Performance Standards (Head Start)<br>• State Day Care Licensing Standards<br>• DPI Standards/Special Education<br>• NAEYC Standards<br>• State Statutes (DPI Regulations)<br>• Evaluation plan based on NAEYC Standards | • Performance Standards (Head Start)<br>• State Day Care Licensing Standards<br>• DPI Standards/Special Education<br>• NAEYC Standards<br>• State Statutes (DPI Regulations)<br>• Evaluation plan based on NAEYC Standards | • Performance Standards (Head Start)<br>• State Day Care Licensing Standards<br>• DPI Standards/Special Education<br>• NAEYC Standards<br>• State Statutes (DPI Regulations)<br>• Evaluation plan based on NAEYC Standards |

## La Crosse Program/Service Indicators for Improving Services for Young Children and Families

Note: This is an adaption of a document originally developed by the Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners.

**Collaborative Planning:**

- A broad base of stakeholders have come together to find common ground, determine assets, and develop a "blended" approach for community supports.

**Funding:**

- Different funding streams are utilized to support the collaborative effort such as: education (school funding, special education, federal funding), Head Start, child care, health and other community resources.
- Program and community resources are shared among programs.

**Facilities:**

- Several programs are provided in one facility; such as child care, Head Start, public school, preschool, disability services, parent education and support, family resource, health care, or social services.
- The facility supports children with appropriate environments.
- The facility supports parents with a parent room and/or resource center.

**Program/Services:**

- Children are in similar classrooms, not classrooms segregated by program type, family income, or child's ability/disability.
- The curriculum follows developmentally appropriate practices which are responsive to the child's learning style, age, ability/disability and cultural/family values.
- Facility/service is available for an extended day.
- Facility/service is available throughout the year.
- Children's goals, objectives, outcomes are jointly planned.
- Support services exist to meet the individual needs of children.
- A family centered philosophy offers partnerships with parents in all phases.
- Access exists to health care services such as WIC (Women, Infants and Children) clinics, immunizations, health screenings, etc.
- A range of services are available which support families in their parenting and working roles such as parent education, family literacy, and adult education.
- Enhanced community transportation services are available to families.

**Community Based:**

- Centers make connections/referrals to other providers and the community at large to ensure access to comprehensive supports for the child and family.

**Staffing Patterns:**

- Staffing patterns support low adult child ratio and team teaching.
- Staff development supports career ladders and professional development.

**Shared Governance:**

- Shares responsibility among families, providers, the public sector, and the private sector.
- Staff and families play an important role in deciding how funds are spent and how programs operate.

**Accountability:**

- Accountability is results based.
- There is ongoing evaluation/assessment by all stakeholders.

January 2000

**Madison Community Early Learning Initiative**
**Phase I: Four-Year-Old Kindergarten**
# SERVICE DELIVERY OPTIONS
(Reformated for printing)

| Option I: Public School Staff/School Site | Option II: Public School Staff/Community Site | Option III: Contracted Services/Community Site | Option IV: Contracted Services/Family Child Care Home Site |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Option IA: One classroom**<br>• AM and PM classes (2.5 hours each, school year) provided by district staff<br>• Children will be enrolled based on:<br>-living in school combined attendance area<br>-child care in combined attendance area<br>-parents work in combined attendance area<br>-homelessness<br>-other<br>• Early Childhood Special Education district programs would provide inclusion/self-contained options as appropriate.<br>• **Children are not enrolled in an early education and care program for any other part of the day.**<br>**Option IB: 2 or more classrooms**<br>• AM and PM classes (2.5 hours each, school year) provided by district staff.<br>• Children will be enrolled based on:<br>-living in school combined attendance area<br>-child care in combined attendance area<br>-parents work in combined attendance area<br>-homelessness<br>• -Early Childhood Special Education district programs would provide inclusion/self-contained options as appropriate.<br>• -Extended education and care programming provided by non-district staff contracted with accredited non-district early learning centers on school site.<br>**Option IC:**<br>**1 classroom and child care community site**<br>• AM and PM classes (2.5 hours each, school year) provided by district staff<br>• Children will be enrolled based on:<br>-living in school combined attendance area<br>-child care in combined attendance area<br>-parents work in combined attendance area<br>-homelessness<br>• -Early Childhood Special Education district programs would provide inclusion/self-contained options as appropriate.<br>• **Extended education and care programming provided by a community agency off site. (A network of accredited family childcare providers and centers will be available to provide extended education and care as needed for** | • AM and PM classes (2.5 hours each, school year).<br>• Public school teacher works within existing part–day or full-day community early childhood site.<br>• Site may or may not be city/nationally accredited, but must at least be working on accreditation.<br>• In addition, ELI staff will be supported in working toward DPI licensure.<br>• Minimum of 437 hours of "instruction" time provided for each child–site would have flexibility in scheduling within the school year.<br>• Site could serve children from outside of the MMSD, but only MMSD children would be funded.<br>• MMSD support services would follow the children.<br>• Collaboration team comprised of all partners to create appropriate match of teacher to | • Community sites (center based programs, Head Start, Family Child Care, part-day preschool programs) will have their own 4-year degreed/DPI licensed teacher.<br>• Sites would need to hold NAEYC/City of Madison accreditation, meet Head Start performance standards.<br>• Funds could be contracted on a per child basis, so sites could serve any number of eligible four year olds.<br>• The contracted per child funding could be used by the site in whatever way the site administrator chooses (i.e., enhanced salaries for staff, operational expenses, etc.).<br>• Minimum of 437 hours of "instruction" time provided for each child – site would have flexibility in scheduling.<br>• Site could provide the program for children in a multi-aged group, getting funding only for the four-year- old children.<br>• Site could serve children from outside of the MMSD but only MMSD children would be funded.<br>• Site would have flexibility in class size, staffing, developmentally appropriate curriculum (which meets the designated ELI standard criteria), etc.<br>• MMSD support services would follow the | • Community Family sites will have their own 4-year degreed/DPI licensed teacher.<br>• Sites would need to hold City of Madison accreditation, and/or hold NAFCC accreditation.<br>• Funds could be contracted on a per child basis, so sites could serve any number of eligible four year olds.<br>• The contracted per child funding could be used by the site in whatever way the site provider chooses (i.e., enhanced salaries for staff, operational expenses, etc.).<br>• Minimum of 437 hours of "instruction" time provided for each child – site would have flexibility in scheduling.<br>• Site could provide the program for children in a multi-aged group, getting funding only for the four-year- old children.<br>• Site could serve children from outside of the MMSD but only MMSD children would be funded.<br>• Site would have flexibility in class size, staffing, developmentally appropriate curriculum (which meets the designated |



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| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **families).**<br>• **The district follows the same transportation agreement used for eligible students of MMSD.** | center. | children.<br>• Collaborative team comprised of all partners. | ELI standard criteria), etc.<br>• MMSD support services would follow the children.<br>• Collaborative team comprised of all partners. |

| Location/Facilities | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Option I:<br>Public School Staff<br>School Site | Option II:<br>Public School Staff<br>Community Site | Option III:<br>Contracted Services<br>Community Site | Option IV:<br>Contracted Services/Family Child Care Home Site |
| **Option IA, IB and IC:**<br>• Where space allows<br>• Environments which meet accreditation guidelines for four-year old kindergarten programs<br>• Outdoor/indoor play space and equipment appropriate for four-year olds<br>• Accessible to all | • Developmentally appropriate environment<br>• Safe, creative, nurturing yet challenging indoor and outdoor spaces<br>• City/Nationally approved<br>• Public school staff would use existing set-up space.<br>• Accessible to all | • Site would need to meet all DHFS licensing standards and accreditation facility criteria (i.e., access to bathrooms, age-appropriate indoor and outdoor play space, etc.).<br>• Accessible to all<br>• Access to neighborhood public schools facilities, i.e., library, gym, art room, etc. | • Site would need to meet all accreditation facility criteria (i.e., access to bathrooms, age-appropriate indoor and outdoor play space, etc.).<br>• Accessible to all<br>• Access to neighborhood public schools facilities, i.e., library, gym, art room, etc. |

| Staff | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Option I:<br>Public School Staff<br>School Site | Option II:<br>Public School Staff<br>Community Site | Option III:<br>Contracted Services<br>Community Site | Option IV:<br>Contracted Services/Family Child Care Home Site |
| **OPTION IA:**<br>• DPI early childhood licensure for all district-employed four-year-old kindergarten teachers<br>• An educational assistant if needed<br>• All district staff will attend school staff meetings and follow school district contract.<br>• Recommended using a 1:10 ratio using accredited site regulations.<br>• Maximum Class size of 18<br>• Annual teacher evaluation by MMSD administrator<br>**OPTION IB and 1C:**<br>• DPI early childhood licensure for all district-employed four-year-old kindergarten teachers.<br>• Minimum of an associate degree in early childhood education for all non-district staff.<br>• All district staff will attend school meetings and follow school district contract.<br>• Staff will be provided opportunities for ongoing professional development<br>• Annual kindergarten teacher evaluation by MMSD administrator. | • DPI license for preschool and/or kindergarten<br>• Teacher assistants with HS diploma and minimum continued coursework as required by city/national standards<br>• Co-teacher/assistant may be existing staff who would benefit from training and support from MMSD to work toward licensing.<br>• Staff will be provided opportunities for ongoing professional development.<br>• Recommended using a 1:10 ratio using accredited site regulations<br>• Maximum Class size of 18<br>• Annual kindergarten teacher evaluation by MMSD administrator, only.<br>• Accreditation agency may observe 4K program as part of the annual review.<br>• | • DPI license for preschool and/or kindergarten<br>• Teacher assistants qualified per licensing regulations<br>• Joint training and professional development for MMSD 4-year-old kindergarten staff and community site staff<br>• Staff will be provided opportunities for ongoing professional development through professional communities established with MMSD sites.<br>• Recommended using a 1:10 ratio using accredited site regulations<br>• Maximum Class size of 18<br>• Annual teacher evaluation | • DPI license for preschool and/or kindergarten<br>• Joint training and professional development for MMSD 4-year-old kindergarten staff and community site staff<br>• Staff will be provided opportunities for ongoing professional development through professional communities established with MMSD sites.<br>• Maximum Class size of 8<br>• Annual teacher evaluation |

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## Activities/Curriculum

| Option I: Public School Staff School Site | Option II: Public School Staff Community Site | Option III: Contracted Services Community Site | Option IV: Contracted Services/Family Child Care Home Site |
|---|---|---|---|
| **OPTION IA AND IB and IC:**<br>• Curriculum is developmentally appropriate within city/national guidelines for 4-year-olds.<br>• Curriculum is sensitive to and flexible in order to meet the needs of a diverse population of children, families and communities.<br>• All programs will have fully integrated curriculum (with no need for pullout programs or specials).<br>• Integrated services for children with special needs with support services from MMSD.<br>• Culturally appropriate along with a focus on anti-bias curriculum and home language.<br>• All programs will follow the instructional design of current MMSD 5 year-old Kindergarten programs, including Special Education, ESL. Art, Music, and Physical Education. | • Curriculum is developmentally appropriate within city/national guidelines for 4-year-olds.<br>• Curriculum is sensitive to and flexible in order to meet the needs of a diverse population of children, families and communities.<br>• All programs will have fully integrated curriculum (with no need for pullout programs or specials).<br>• Integrated services for children with special needs with support services from MMSD<br>• Culturally appropriate along with a focus on anti-bias curriculum and home language. | • Curriculum is developmentally appropriate within city/national guidelines for 4-year-olds.<br>• Curriculum is sensitive to and flexible in order to meet the needs of a diverse population of children, families and communities.<br>• All programs will have fully integrated curriculum (with no need for pullout programs or specials).<br>• Integrated services for children with special needs with support services from MMSD.<br>• Culturally appropriate along with a focus on anti-bias curriculum and home language. | • Curriculum is developmentally appropriate within accredited guidelines for 4-year-olds.<br>• Curriculum is sensitive to and flexible in order to meet the needs of a diverse population of children, families and communities.<br>• Integrated services for children with special needs with support services from MMSD.<br>• Culturally appropriate along with a focus on anti-bias curriculum and home language. |

## Funding

| Option I: Public School Staff School Site | Option II: Public School Staff Community Site | Option III: Contracted Services Community Site | Option IV: Contracted Services/Family Child Care Home Site |
|---|---|---|---|
| **OPTION IA:**<br>Programming will be funded by MMSD.<br><br>**OPTION IB:**<br>• The AM and PM half-day component provided by the district teacher will be funded by MMSD.<br>• The extended education and care component contracted with an accredited early learning center will provide the funding as agreed upon via contract.<br>• Space will be provided by MMSD.<br>**OPTION IC:**<br>• The AM and PM half-day component provided by the district teacher will be funded by MMSD.<br>• Extended education and care programming provided by a community agency off site will be funded by the off site agency.<br>• The district follows the same transportation agreement used for eligible students of MMSD. | • MMSD Contracted Teacher<br>• City Funding<br>• Programs will continue to charge fees as needed to meet costs.<br>• Grants<br>• Federal Funds<br>• Child Care subsidies<br>• Head Start<br>• State | • State<br>• MMSD Contracted Per Pupil Agreement<br>• Special education funding.<br>• City fund-raising.<br>• Grants<br>• Federal funds<br>• Child care subsidies<br>• Parent fees for extended day<br>• Funding will include consideration of all overhead costs including administration, space use, materials, salaries, special education allotment. | • State<br>• MMSD Contracted Per Pupil Agreement<br>• Special education funding.<br>• City fund-raising.<br>• Grants<br>• Federal funds<br>• Child care subsidies<br>• Parent fees for extended day<br>• Funding will include consideration of all overhead costs including administration, space use, materials, salaries, special education allotment. |

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## Parent Involvement

| Option I: Public School Staff School Site | Option II: Public School Staff Community Site | Option III: Contracted Services Community Site | Option IV: Contracted Services/Family Child Care Home Site |
|---|---|---|---|
| **OPTION IA and IB and IC:** Family Outreach Program will be provided for 4 year old kindergarten with the support of additional staff support. | • Parent Involvement would follow ECE sites family programming with increased support from the district to include but not limited to parent education workshops, home visits, family nights, P/T conferences, orientation, newsletters, classroom involvement, etc.<br>• Parent Advisory and/or governance to follow ECE sites' policies. | • Parent input in developing programs.<br>• Parent advisory and/or governance.<br>• Parent volunteer opportunities.<br>• Family outreach and events | • Parent input in developing programs.<br>• Parent advisory and/or governance.<br>• Parent volunteer opportunities.<br>• Family outreach and events |

## Support Services

| Option I: Public School Staff School Site | Option II: Public School Staff Community Site | Option III: Contracted Services Community Site | Option IV: Contracted Services/Family Child Care Home Site |
|---|---|---|---|
| **OPTION IA, IB and IC:**<br>• Available services for 4K:<br>-Nurse<br>-Psychologist<br>-Social worker<br>-ESL, bilingual, bicultural<br>-Special education<br>-Homeless<br>-Vision and hearing screening<br>• USDA Food Service:<br>• **OPTION IA:**<br>Breakfast – AM program<br>Lunch – PM program<br>• **OPTION IB:**<br>Breakfast – AM program<br>Lunch – PM program<br>Midday-snacks<br>• **OPTION IC:**<br>Breakfast – AM program<br>Lunch – PM program | • Available services for 4K<br>-Nurse<br>-Psychologist<br>-Social worker<br>-ESL, bilingual,<br>-Special education<br>-Homeless<br>-Vision and hearing screening<br>• USDA food service | • Available services for 4K:<br>-Nurse<br>-Psychologist<br>-Social worker<br>-ESL, bilingual,<br>-Special education<br>-Homeless<br>-Vision and hearing screening<br>• USDA food service | • Available services for 4K:<br>-Nurse<br>-Psychologist<br>-Social worker<br>-ESL, bilingual,<br>-Special education<br>-Homeless<br>-Vision and hearing screening<br>• USDA food service |

## Standards

| Option I: Public School Staff School Site | Option II: Public School Staff Community Site | Option III: Contracted Services Community Site | Option IV: Contracted Services/Family Child Care Home Site |
|---|---|---|---|
| • DHFS licensing standards<br>• City of Madison accreditation standards<br>• NAEYC accreditation standards<br>• Head Start performance standards<br>• DPI standards<br>• Annual review similar to that of city accreditation | • DHFS licensing standards<br>• City of Madison accreditation standards<br>• NAEYC accreditation standards<br>• Head Start performance standards<br>• DPI standards<br>• Annual review similar to that of city accreditation | • DHFS licensing standards<br>• City of Madison accreditation standards<br>• NAEYC accreditation standards<br>• Head Start performance standards<br>• DPI standards<br>• Annual review similar to that of city accreditation<br>• NAFCC accreditation standards | • City of Madison accreditation standards<br>• NAFCC accreditation standards<br>• DPI standards<br>• Annual review similar to that of city accreditation |

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University of Wisconsin-Madison

**Phase 1**

Dane County Head Start

City of Madison Wisconsin

Early Learning Initiative

4 Year Old

Madison Metropolitan School District

January 17, 2003

Dear Early Childhood Center/Family Provider:

For the past several months, a community-wide planning group (Collaborative Council) has been meeting to assess the feasibility of proceeding with community based preschool opportunities for all Madison residents who are four years of age by September 1, 2003. This effort, called the Early Learning Initiative, is seeking to determine the level of interest from Madison area child care community to become center/home partnering agencies for the 2003-04 school year.

You are one of many organizations/homes in our community dedicated to serving young children and their families. We recognize that collaboration between our agencies and the schools would have the potential of providing better support to families and ultimately improving our services as a whole. Our common interest in providing every four-year-old an opportunity for a quality learning experience is one important way we can work together to achieve our common goals.

Enclosed you will find a description of the mission and goals of our collaboration, options available for the partnership, as well as a request for you to apply to become an active partner. There are several subcommittees working on your behalf, on issues ranging from curriculum to seeking revision of teacher licensure. We are in the process of refining resources and will do all we can to ensure that everyone who wants to participate has the necessary supports and tools to do so.

We welcome your agency/home to consider joining this collaboration as one of the two models described on the enclosed Request to Participate Form. Since we share a strong commitment to providing the highest standard of experience for our community's children, only centers/family home providers currently NAEYC/NAFCC Accredited or Accredited by the City of Madison Office of Community Services with a DPI licensed teacher may apply to be full community partners. A provisional one-year status will be offered for centers/family home providers interested in actively pursuing NAEYC/NAFCC and/or City of Madison Accreditation and renewing or acquiring a state license. A detailed description of the Provisional Approval Process and a flow chart outlining the steps in achieving Full and Provisional Partnership status are included with this invitation.

While this informational packet is being delivered to you, the planning group is also developing a second presentation for the Madison Metropolitan School Board, which is targeted for the end of February. The School Board must give final approval to the program and funding. We hope that the information contained in this packet is a first step in providing you with information that will help you decide your level of interest.

We know that many of you have questions and we believe that additional work needs to be done to provide clarification on many issues that was not captured enough through the public forums in December and in joint partnership with United Way in January. Please make every effort to join us in the last two Community Conversations in January listed below. You may also contact one of the Collaborative Council members noted at the conclusion of this letter for more information.

- Community Conversation- "High Quality Cost Effective Parent Involvement Programs" Dr. Arthur Reynolds, presenter. Thursday, January 23, 2003 6:30-8:00 p.m. Northport Packers Apartment, 1937 Northport Drive, Madison

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- Community Conversation- "Systems of Child Care and Early Childhood Education: Other States, Other Nations" Dr. Marianne Bloch, presenter. Thursday, January 30, 2003 6:30-8:00 p.m. Memorial High School 201 South Gammon Road, Madison

We recognize that communication with the child care provider community is of absolute importance and we have been working hard to organize information; answer and anticipate concerns. We hope that our mutual dialogue will help us all in determining the work yet to be done and aid us in preparing for the delivery of a solid presentation to the School Board in February.

**If you know that you wish to participate in this collaboration, please complete the enclosed form Step 1: Request to Become a Partnering Agency by January 10, 2003** (mailing and fax information are included on the last page of the application).
If you are interested but unable to attend one of the two scheduled meetings, please contact any of the following representatives:
Sue Abplanalp: MMSD, 663-1592, sabplanalp@madison.k12.wi.us;
Lois Evanson, City of Madison Office of Community Services, 266-6520, levanson@ci.madison.wi.us;
Carol Keintz, Dane County Parent Council, 275-6756, ckeintz@mailbag.com;
Sarah Dill, Director/Meeting House Nursery School, 233-9776, Mhns@terracom.net

Sincerely,

Madison's Early Learning Initiative System Team

**Background:**
The Madison community has been involved in ongoing efforts to assess the feasibility of providing community based preschool opportunities for all Madison residents who are four years of age by September 1, 2003. This effort, called the Madison Early Learning Initiative, has been developing over the past year to move the project forward with the goal of proposing a 4 Year Old Kindergarten Program to the Board of Education in December. As many as 7 different committees have been looking at issues ranging from curriculum to contracts. Below is the vision and mission of the project:

**ELI Vision:**
ELI is a comprehensive high quality early learning system that meets the developmental needs of all young children in the Madison area.

**ELI Mission for 4K (Phase 1 of the joint initiative):**
To create a shared community vision and commitment around an early education program for all four-year-olds in the Madison Metropolitan School District. Such a 4K program would be made available in a variety of public and private settings and could begin in the fall of 2003.

*Team Members:*
Sue Abplanalp and Jennie Allen, Madison Metropolitan School District, Marcia Huemoeller and Carol Keintz, Dane County Parent Council, Lois Evanson and Dorothy Conniff, City of Madison , Diane Gallagher, AFSCME Council 40, Becky Van Houten, Preschool of the Arts, Lynn Edlefson, University of Wisconsin Office of Campus Child Care, Sarah Dill, Meeting House Nursery School, Barb Delaine, Community Coordinated Child Care

**Madison Early Learning Initiative (ELI) for Four-Year-Olds**
**Step 1: Request to Become A Partnering Agency for 2003-2004 ****

**I. Community Site Information**

**Center Name as appears on State License** **Phone at Center**

**E-mail** **FAX**

**Center Address** **City** **Zip**

**Contact Person at Center**

**Person Authorized to make commitments for the center or agency or FCC** **Phone Number**

**II. Center Organization**

**Nonprofit (Chapter 181)**
**___Private nonprofit single-service child care agency OR**
**___Service component of a multi-service private nonprofit**

**Business Corporation (Chapter 180)**
**___Single service child care business corporation OR**
**___Service component of a multi-service business corporation**

**___Sole Proprietorship**

**Government or Educational Institution**
**___Child care program sponsored by or under contract to a public educational or governmental entity**

**Church/Religious Affiliated**
**Religious Training is part of the curriculum ____ Yes ____No**
**___Child care program sponsored by a religious organization**

**FCC/Center is licensed by the State of Wisconsin** **License #: _____**
**___Yes, date of License expiration: _____** **Licensed Capacity: _____**
**___No, please explain _____**

**III. Type of Community Partnership Your Agency is Interested In Developing**

**___ A four-year-old program taught by a DPI licensed preschool teacher or family child care provider employed by the partnering agency. Additional services, such as all wrap around programming, are the responsibility of the partnering agency or family child care home. The agency is paid on a per child basis for every enrolled Madison resident served that is age four years by September 1, 2003.**

**OR (For Centers Only)**

**___ An itinerant agreement whereby a DPI licensed teacher employed by MMSD delivers the four year old program at the agency site. Additional services, such as wrap around programming, are the responsibility of the partnering agency.**

**IV Community Site Description Check all that apply.**
**____ NAEYC Accredited** **Date of most current accreditation: _____**

**____ NAFCC Accredited** **Date of most current accreditation: _____**

**____ Accredited by the City of Madison** **Date of most current accreditation_____**

**Accreditation in Process: ____ NAEYC ____ NAFCC ____ City of Madison**

**Date materials submitted to accrediting agency: _____**

***_____Our/my site is not accredited currently, but are/am interested in collaborating with MMSD on the ELI Program as a provisional site (described in the Application Flow Chart).***

**Hours of Operation: _____**

**Interested in providing 4 year old program during _____ school year**

**How many four-year-olds can you serve? _____AM _____PM**

**Are you able to include four-year-olds who want to participate only in a 2 ½ hour program?**
**_____ YES How many? _____ _____ NO**

**Are you currently serving children with IEP's? _____ YES _____ NO**

**Are children at your center currently receiving itinerant services from MMSD? _____ YES _____ NO**

**Are you currently serving children with English as a second language?**
**_____ YES _____ NO**

**V. State Licensing Status**

**In the last twelve months has your center been cited by State Licensing for non-compliance?**
**____YES ____NO**
**If yes, indicate date of the citation and explain the substance of the citation.**

**Have you received a "substantiated complaint" in the last 12 months?**
**____YES ____NO**
**If yes, indicate the date of the complaint and the subsequent outcome.**

**VI. Staffing**

**Number of teachers/caregivers certified by DPI for preschool with the following licenses:**
**_____ #080-090** (____Current ____Lapsed) **_____ #808-809** (____Current ____Lapsed)
**_____ #100-108** with three years experience ( ____Current ____Lapsed)

**Number of center teacher assistants with EC I (40 hours)_____ or I & II (80 hours) _____**

**Center employees a Site Coordinator (Director/Coordinator) _____ YES _____ NO**

**VII. Current Staff-child ratios at your center:**

**How many 4 year olds will be served in the program?**_____

**What is the age range in the proposed program?**_____

**What is the proposed adult/child ratio in the program?**_____

**VIII. Credentials of Four Year Old Program Staff:**

| Staff Member | DPI License Status (lapsed or current) | Registry Level | Language(s) Spoken | Education ** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |
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** Please indicate specific degree/credential and area of concentration and Child Development Associate (CDA).

**IX. This application should be signed by the individual who is authorized to sign for the agency or center.**

**Date:**_____ **Signature:** _____

**Name:** _____
(print)

**Title:** _____
(print)

**Please return this application postmarked no later than February 10, 2003 or received by FAX to:**

**ELI Collaborative Council Review Team**
**c/o Lois Evanson**
**City of Madison Office of Community Services**
**PO Box 2627**
**Madison, WI 53701**
**Fax" 608-261-9626**
**Please note that this application will be forwarded to MMSD**

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY** **Date Received:**

_____ Forwarded to ELI Collaborative Council Review Team on: _____

_____ Reviewed and approved for consideration as a Full Partner Site and forwarded on to Collaborative Council Review Team.

_____ Reviewed and approved for evaluation as a possible Provisional Partner Site

_____ Referred for NAEYC Validator review on: _____

_____ Referred for NAFCC Validator review on: _____

_____ Declined for consideration as a Provisional Partner Site on: _____

Letter sent to center/home Director on: _____

_____ Accepted for consideration as a Provisional Partner Site on: _____

Letter sent to center/home Director on: _____

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_____ Accepted application forwarded to MMSD for 2003 – 04 contract consideration

_____ Center/home notified of contract status on: _____

_____ Center/home given contract for 2003 –04
_____ Itinerant Site with _____ MMSD Teachers serving _____ children
_____ Non-itinerant Site serving _____ children

_____ No contract awarded for 2003 -04

_____ Contract response received on: _____

_____ Accepted contract for 2003-04 _____ Declined contract for 2003-04

Approved by MMSD_____Date:_____

City of Madison Wisconsin

Phase 1

ELI Early Learning Initiative

4 Year Old

Madison Metropolitan School District

DRAFT

**4 Year Old Kindergarten**
**Early Learning Initiative (ELI)**
***Questions and Answers***
**November 12, 2002**
*(Reformated for this publication)*

***1. What is this I hear about the Madison Metropolitan School District planning for a new program for four-year olds?*** The Madison Metropolitan School District conducted a nine-month (March-Dec 2001) feasibility study to determine if the Madison community was open to and supportive of a half-day early educational program open to all four year olds. The study revealed community support for a universally available program, what the program would basically look like, and provided strategies for how such a program could best be funded and implemented.

At the completion of the study, the Madison school district administration announced that it would delay the implementation of a universally available voluntary 4-Year-Old Kindergarten until the fall of 2003. "Time has simply run out on us" explained District Administrator Art Rainwater. "There remain fiscal uncertainties for both the city and the school district that make it impossible for us to go ahead at this time." He noted that the Performance and Achievement Committee of the School Board had recommended implementation contingent on both state and private funding sources being in place. Without the resources, for the 2002-03 school year, planning resumed for implementation of a program following year (2003-2004).

***3. What funding sources for 4 Year Old Kindergarten do other cities use in the State of Wisconsin use?*** There are four sources of funding commonly used for 4K and are listed in order from most to least common:

1. Short term loans paid in three year span (LaCrosse and Wausau use this process)
2. Borrowing on other line items in the district budget.
3. Charter school grants (charters were the most common of all grants)
4. Head Start Resources (Eau Claire)

***4. Do other school districts in Wisconsin have 4K programs?*** Yes. Currently 136 of the 430 school districts in Wisconsin have a 4K program, which is open to all the age-eligible four year-olds. Another 50 districts are actively studying the possibility. While there has been a rather rapid expansion of 4K programs in the past 10 years, it is of interest to note that several districts throughout the state have four year programs in place and the Milwaukee area has had 4K for nearly a century now.

***5. Are other states doing anything with four year-olds?*** Actually, the majority of the states now have some kind of state funding to support education for four year-olds. Some states are relying on the state's lottery revenues (Georgia) and other states (California) use the state's tobacco settlement.

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***6. Didn't the Madison Metropolitan School District have a four-year-old program in the past?*** Yes. Since the 1970's, the Madison Metropolitan School District has operated several classes of a half-day program for four-year olds.

***7. What will the impact of the 4 year-old kindergarten program be on programs that currently serve four year-old children?*** The new universally available 4K program will be built in large measure on the existing centers, which are currently serving four year-olds. The new system will be collaborative, building on the inherent strengths of existing programs and characterized by variety, choices and creativity.

***8. Are other school districts in Wisconsin using a collaborative public/private approach?*** Yes. Milwaukee has for many years been sending its public school 4K teachers into various private child care centers. In other words, the children in childcare have received a public school kindergarten program without having to leave their center. LaCrosse is the first school district to build its entire 4K program on a public-private understanding, Eau Claire, Wausau, Green Bay and others have begun joint initiatives with their communities.

***9. If an accredited center wants to contract with MMSD, but they do not have a teacher at the center with a valid license, could MMSD temporarily assign a teacher to the center?*** MMSD will support the center with a teacher holding a permanent contract. This is Option II of the service delivery model. This issue is going to be negotiated with MTI.

***10. Is it possible to provide 4K programming for all eligible 4 year olds by only using accredited centers and family providers?*** No, it is estimated that 1,400 4 year olds may access this program. We will need to provide a variety of locations and choices in programming through the collaborative efforts of MMSD, accredited centers and family providers.

***11. What are the established criteria for an early childhood "licensed teachers"?***
A meeting with Jill Haglund, from DPI clarified that there are a variety of degrees for early childhood education. To teach 4-year old kindergarten, the teacher of record shall hold one of the following valid licenses:

080: Pre-kindergarten
083: Pre-kindergarten – 3
086: Pre-kindergarten – 6
088: Pre-kindergarten – 8
090: Pre-kindergarten/Kindergarten
100: Kindergarten
101: Kindergarten – 1
102: Kindergarten – 2
103: Kindergarten – 3
104: Kindergarten – 4
105: Kindergarten – 5
106: Kindergarten – 6
107: Kindergarten – 7
108: Kindergarten – 8

Attached is a detailed description of the DPI regulations.

***12. Do we have to call the 4K program a 4 year-old kindergarten program?***
Yes. There are many early childhood programs in the Madison area. In order to make the program easily understood by the community the term 4 year old kindergarten will be used and hopefully this will add clarity to the joint initiative between MMSD and the city of Madison. Also, the district receives some reimbursement for every **4 year-old kindergarten student** within the district. Wisconsin made a constitutional commitment to early education in 1848 when

the State Constitution Article X called for school districts to be uniform as practical and free to all children between the ages of four and 20 years. In the 1980s the state legislature renewed state aid for four-year old kindergarten and expanded state aid for full-day five-year-old kindergarten. In short, centers will be given reimbursement for establishing or partnering with the district to create a universally available 4 year-old kindergarten program that interfaces with the childcare programs in the Madison community.

***13. What is the required DPI Teacher/Child Ratio for 4 year old Kindergarten?*** There are no requirements on the state level. Accreditation regulations are 1:10 with maximum class size of 18 children. The recommendation of the ELI Council is to use the accreditation standards for class sizes. Therefore, when class sizes exceed 10 children two adults must be present. At least one of these adults must be a licensed teacher.

***14. If a center contracts with the district, what additional affiliation other than a contract will the center have with MMSD?*** The 4K program was developed to allow autonomy for each center, while embracing the vision, mission, standards, professional development and operational goals of the joint initiative. Basically, the centers will be in partnership with MMSD. There will be several professional development opportunities available to centers in this relationship also. Contract agreements are being negotiated and developed with details forthcoming.

***15. Will curriculum be dictated by MMSD?*** No. A Curriculum and Professional Development committee has been developed (representing many community members) by the ELI Council which is defining the early learning standards and aligning them with local, state and national accreditation agencies. The standards are sufficiently flexible to allow high quality programs to maintain their unique curricula.

***16. Could centers target a specific classroom (say one out of three) or do all classrooms in the center need to be part of the 4K partnership?*** Centers could target just one classroom if they choose. Reimbursement and compliance will reflect this agreement.

***17. Can the 4 Year-Old Kindergarten program be extended during the summer in centers/family providers?*** The 4K program is a program designed for a minimum of 437 hours of "instruction" time provided. Sites will have flexibility in scheduling within the school year. Summer programming is separate from 4 year-old kindergarten.

***18. How will centers be able to afford this partnership if they must provide some scholarship assistance?*** Our research shows that several centers/family providers already have a certain percentage of their programs designated for scholarships. The sources of funding are through county assistance, city assistance, center scholarships, childcare tuition assistance and child welfare services. MMSD reimbursement will be an additional source of revenue.

***19. Parents will be expecting a reduction in fees with this program. How can centers/family providers address this expectation?*** Centers need to be creative in addressing this issue. By law, all children in this program have rights to "free and appropriate public education." MMSD is seeking legal council on this question to provide clarity for the public.

***20. Parents with children in half-day programs will expect a "free program." How can centers survive this plan when reimbursement from MMSD is not fully funding the cost of each child?*** Again, centers will need to be creative and think about alternative structures and opportunities for students based on this issue. Parents will need to know the changes in the program (ie: joint curriculum, DPI licensed teacher, etc.) that will benefit their children to stay in the center. Again, legal council will be forthcoming to clarify this concern.

***21. What other resources are available to centers to start-up this new 4K program?*** Local foundations might be willing to provide resources for centers. If the 4 year-old kindergarten program is established, MMSD has secured funds to support professional development and specific curriculum needs for all programs.

***22. How will MMSD provide transportation?***
Transportation will be provided to students within their home attendance areas. The details of this arrangement will be defined if the project gets approval.

***23. Are religious programs excluded from this 4K initiative?*** Participation of religious schools and MMSD 4 year-old kindergarten program will be a decision that the Board of Education will need to consider.

# Partnership Agreement between CAP Services' Head Start & Montello School District
## Collaborative Project "Montello Early Learning Center"
## 2002 – 2003 School Year

*This agreement establishes the "Montello Early Learning Center", a collaboration between CAP Services' Head Start and the Montello School District. The agreement outlines the responsibilities and commitments of each party. It is not met to be all-inclusive and can be altered with agreement of both parties at any time.*

| Program Area | Head Start Program | Montello School District |
|---|---|---|
| *Overall Programming:* The Head Start Performance Standards, State Day Care Licensing, Head Start Education Philosophy, Family & Community Partnership Philosophy and Health Related Services Philosophy will guide the manner in which services are offered. The classrooms will be team-taught. | Children enrolled in Head Start will receive the full compliment of Head Start services at no cost to the family. Head Start staff will support the implementation of the IEP goals for children with special educational needs. IEP goals will be addressed and incorporated into the weekly lesson planning through individualization of each child's learning needs. | Children enrolled solely in school district programming, pre-kindergarten and/or special education will receive the Head Start educational programming. Parents will be encouraged to fully participate in the parent involvement component. Students with special educational needs will have an IEP developed under the auspice of the school district. IEP goals will be addressed and incorporated into the weekly lesson planning through individualization of each child's learning needs. The school district staff will complete all aspects of the educational plan as outlined in the HS Education Philosophy and Early Childhood Manual.<br><br>Children enrolled solely in school district programming will not be required to have a physical or dental exam upon enrollment unless specifically required by the school district. These children will be required to complete an immunization record, Prenatal/Birth History form and a DIAL 3 Parent Questionnaire in order to provide |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | appropriate programming. |
| *Administration:* Both the school district and Head Start will jointly supervise the program. | The Head Start Site Manager will provide on-site supervision. The Program Coordinator will provide administrative support. The Site Manager will work in conjunction with the Forest Lane Elementary School Principal to oversee this project. | The Forest Lane Elementary School Principal will provide supervision to the assigned school district staff and will work in conjunction with the Head Start Site Manager to oversee this project. |
| *Facility:* The classrooms (indoors and out doors) will be maintained in a safe and clean manner that complies with state day care regulations and Head Start Performance Standards | Will complete regular health and safety checklists at the Head Start facility and in the school district classroom for the period of time that facility is in use. Site Manager will assign routine cleaning duties and recruit volunteers from Northland to help maintain facility. | School district will provide to Head Start cleaning support that is equivalent to two days of custodial service. |
| *Education Program*: All classrooms will be team taught by an integrated teaching team of consisting of Head Start and school district staff. The Creative Curriculum and Project Approach will be implemented. The Work Sampling System will be the assessment system. The DAIL 3 will be the screening tool. Individual programming will occur for children with special learning needs through adapting the curriculum to address their IEP goals. | Head Start staff will be responsible for implementing all aspects of the Program Plan, Head Start Performance Standards and adhering to State Day Care regulations. Head Start staff will implement the educational program, in conjunction with school district staff, as outlined in the Education Philosophy and Early Childhood Manual. Head Start staff will support the implementation of IEP's in the classroom. | School District staff will implement the educational program, in conjunction with the Head Start staff, as outlined in the Education Philosophy and Early Childhood Manual. School District staff will be responsible for developing and implementing IEP's. |
| *Program Eligibility:* Children eligible for services in this project include children who are Head Start eligible, children who are eligible for pre-kindergarten, and pre-school aged children in need of special educational services. To receive services in the full-day classroom children must reside in the Montello School District service area, be 4 years old by | Head Start will be responsible for recruiting and enrolling Head Start eligible children. Head Start staff will assist parents in completing the program application. Head Start staff will be responsible for keeping the Head Start slots full. Head Start will also give support to recruiting and enrolling eligible children in pre-kindergarten and will make | School District staff will responsible for recruiting and enrolling pre-kindergarten children and children in need of exceptional educational services. School District staff will also support the recruitment and enrollment of Head Start eligible children. School District staff will be responsible for evaluating in a timely fashion, children suspected of having an |

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| September 1 and be Head Start eligible. To receive part day services children either need to be eligible for pre-kindergarten or be Head Start eligible. The number of children to be served will be jointly determined and will be in accordance with Head Start Performance Standards, Day Care Regulations and State Statutes | appropriate referrals for special services if needed. | exceptional educational need.<br><br>The school district will provide for additional staff if enrollment of pre-k and EC special education students warrant additional classroom space. |
| *Calendar:* The program will follow the school district calendar for part year Head Start, early childhood special needs and pre-kindergarten services. Classroom services will be offered Monday-Thursday. Friday will be a day used for home visits, staff planning and conferencing, training and classroom set up. | Head Start services will be offered for 50 weeks in the full day classroom. Head Start services will be coupled with parent paid childcare during the summer months. Head Start services in the part day classroom will follow the school district calendar. | Pre-kindergarten and special needs programming will follow the official school district calendar. No services will be offered during the summer months. |
| *Meal Service:* The Head Start nutritional program will be followed in all classrooms. The Head Start menu for breakfast, lunch and snack will be used in all classrooms. The CCFP program will be used to support this aspect of the program for those children qualifying. | Head Start will assume the financial responsibility for providing meals and snacks for all Head Start enrolled children and school district only children who qualify for the food program and have completed an income statement. Head Start will bill school district only families who either do not qualify for the food program or who choose not to complete an income statement. Head Start will assume responsibility for collecting the weekly meal and snack fee from self-pay families. | School district staff will assist in collecting the fee from the self-pay families and will assist with getting the income statements completed. |
| *Transportation:* Transportation will be provided to all Head Start enrolled children and to school district children living on the school district bus route. | Head Start will transport children living outside of the Montello school district bus route, and Head Start children living in the city of Montello that are not on the bus route | Montello school district will transport Head Start only; school district only and dually enrolled children who live on the school district bus route. |

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| | because they live within what is considered walking distance of the school. | |
| *Supplies/Resources:* The programming to be provided at the Montello Learning Center will determine the supplies and resources needed. Head Start and the school district will share the providing of these resources. | Head Start will be responsible for ordering all classroom/center supplies. The teaching teams will determine what supplies are needed and will make their requests to the program through the Site Manager. | The school district will transfer to Head Start, through CESA 5, the resources they normally would use for pre-k and early childhood special education services. School District teaching staff, in conjunction with HS staff, will determine what is needed to carry out the program and make those purchase requests through the Head Start Site Manager. |
| *Training:* Whenever possible the staff from the Montello Early Learning Center will attend appropriate Head Start and/or school district training as a team. | Head Start will make all of its related training available to the school district staff at no cost to the school district. | The school district will make all of it's related training available to the Head Start staff at no cost to Head Start. |
| *Recording Keeping:* Records pertaining to the educational programming will follow the requirements as outlined in the Head Start Education Philosophy and Early Childhood Manual and as *required by the school district and will be kept on all children. | Head Start staff will keep all records on assigned children and will support school district staff in tracking IEP goals of children with special needs. | School district staff will keep all records on assigned children and will take the lead with children with IEP's. |
| *Student Insurance:* | Head Start carries liability insurance which covers the building, Head Start students and volunteers while they are engaged in Head Start sponsored activities. | Parents of children not dually enrolled in Head Start will receive information regarding student insurance, which is provided to all school district students. |
| *Substitutes:* Whenever possible substitute staff will be brought in to cover absences. | Head Start will provide substitutes in the form of paid staff or volunteers whenever possible when a Head Start staff person is absent. | The school district will provide a substitute whenever possible when a school district staff person is absent. |
| *Program Capacity:* This project is starting with three classrooms which have, as a | No more than 45 children will be enrolled in Head Start, with a maximum of 20 being dual- | No more than 20 pre-kindergarten children will be enrolled in the full-day classroom. |

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| maximum capacity, room for no more than 20 children per classroom (a total of 60 children). Classroom space is available at the Montello Early Learning Center that can accommodate an additional classroom of 13-15 children if expansion of services becomes necessary. Should this occur, school district and Head Start administrators would meet to develop a plan to address an expansion of services that would maintain an integrated teaching approach | enrolled in the full-day classroom. An additional 25 children will be served in the part day classrooms. Should pre-kindergarten and EC enrollment require the adding of another classroom, Head Start would work with the school district in developing a plan that would continue the integrated teaching approach established in the initial classrooms. | Children in this classroom must also be Head Start eligible. An additional 15-part day pre-kindergarten and EC children can be enrolled in the two part day classrooms<br>If enrollment demands require additional classroom space, the school district would add additional staff to address this need. |

**Nancy A. Hipskind, Ph.D., District Administrator for Montello Schools**

**Catherine A. Arentsen, Director of Pre-School Services, CAP Services, Inc.**

## Portage Community Collaboration for Four-Year-Olds

**Vision Statement:**

All four-year olds in our community have access to a quality early learning experience.

**Goal:**

Our goal is to create collaborative models of care/education available to four-year olds in our community.

**Belief Statements:**

- The entire community is responsible for growing our children.
- Families differ in the amount of support they want in raising their children.
- Families know what is best for their children.
- Children enter school at different levels of development.
- Children should enter school with the maximum positive learning experience which can be provided in a variety of ways, (i.e. at home, preschool, Head Start, Daycare)
- Children need continuity of care from responsive caregivers.
- Some families are not aware of the options/resources available.
- Options/resources are not accessible to all families.
- Barriers to program access need to be minimized.
- Quality care/education can be provided by people with different backgrounds and training.
- Transitions for four year olds should be minimized.
- Children learn in a variety of environments.
- Children's style of learning vary.
- The environment should support a variety of ways to learn.
- Parental involvement enhances a child's growth and development.

**Rationale:**

Why provide a voluntary four-year-old preschool program?

The purpose is to give every four-year-old in our community a developmentally appropriate learning experience in a quality group setting and provide a support system to their family.

The curriculum will focus on language experience, social competence, and self-confidence in an environment that helps children grow as individuals. Active, exploratory learning is encouraged and supported by a team of early childhood professionals.

By providing every family access to a blended system of high quality, comprehensive early childhood programming, the Community Collaboration for Four-Year-Olds would address these issues:

- fragmented service delivery
- duplication of services
- gaps in services
- categorizing and labeling children
- children shuffled between programs and providers
- difficult access to services at affordable costs
- inconsistent quality of services

# Wausau Preschool Collaboration

## Language Arts Standards and Benchmarks

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| Standard A – Demonstrates competence in the general skills and strategies of the reading process | |
| Pre-K Benchmarks | PK.1 Understands that print conveys meaning and creates mental images.<br>PK.2 Understands how print is organized and read (identifies front and back covers, title page and author, follows words left to right and top to bottom, recognizes the significance of space between words, holds and pages through books)<br>PK.3 Uses picture clues and picture captions to aid comprehension and to make predications about content.<br>PK.4 Demonstrates a positive attitude toward reading and their potential to become a reader.<br>PK.5 Demonstrates phonemic awareness (discriminates between sounds, understands similarities between words, understands that sounds of letters make-up words).<br>PK.6 Begins to demonstrate the ability to associate the names of letters with their shape and sound.<br>PK.7 Begins to identify the first letters in familiar words. |
| Standard B – Demonstrates competence in comprehension of a variety of literature, songs and fingerplays. | |
| Pre-K Benchmarks | PK.1 Predicts possible outcomes and retells a simple story in sequence.<br>PK.2 Knows the main ideas or theme of a story.<br>PK.3 Memorizes predictable text, songs, rhymes, poems, fingerplays and simple stories.<br>PK.4 Relates stories to personal experiences. |
| Standard C – Demonstrates competence in the general skills and strategies of the writing process. | |
| Pre-K Benchmarks | PK.1 Proceeds through the developmental stages of writing through journal activities (scribble, horizontal shapes, pictures, repetitive shapes, letters, words)<br>PK.2 Verbally shares information relating to self-made drawings and writing.<br>PK.3 Prints first name and copies print.<br>PK.4 Prints from left to right.<br>PK.5 Uses 3-finger grasp to hold writing instrument. |
| Standard D – Demonstrates competence in listening skills. | |
| Pre-K Benchmarks | PK.1 Listens and responds to oral directions.<br>PK.2 Uses attentive listening strategies (focuses attention on speaker, maintains attention in large group activities)<br>PK.3 Follows rules of conversation (takes turns, raises hand to speak in groups, does not interrupt). |

| Standard E – Demonstrates competence in speaking clearly and effectively. | |
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| Pre-K Benchmarks | PK.1 Uses different voice level and intonations for different situations.<br>PK.2 Makes meaningful contributions in class and group discussions (recounts personal experiences, reports on personal knowledge about a topic and initiates conversation).<br>PK.3 Asks and answers basic questions.<br>PK.4 Names objects and pictures in their environment.<br>PK.5 Recites and sings familiar stories, fingerplays, songs and rhymes.<br>PK.6 Stays on topic in conversations and class discussions.<br>PK.7 Describes objects by shape, color and size.<br>PK.8 Uses language to express personal needs and provide personal information (name, age, siblings).<br>PK.9 Plays with words through rhyme and repetition.<br>PK.10 Speech is generally intelligible (not error free).<br>PK.11 Child creates sentences up to 8 words in length in their native language. |
| Standard F – Demonstrates competence in using media and technology. | |
| Pre-K Benchmarks | PK.1 Listens and responds to a variety of media (books, audiotapes, videos, computer programs).<br>PK.2 Uses a computer (operates a mouse to make selections, follows oral directions given on a computer). |

Mathematics Standards and Benchmarks

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| Standard A – Uses a variety of strategies in the problem-solving process. | |
| Pre-K Benchmarks | PK.1 Demonstrates sorting by color, size, shape and category.<br>PK.2 Demonstrates ability to continue basic patterns.<br>PK.3 Completes picture and shape puzzles.<br>PK.4 Builds block structures. |
| fStandard B – Understands and applies basic properties of the concepts of numbers up to 10. | |
| Pre-K Benchmarks | PK.1 Rote counts to 10.<br>PK.2 Understands symbolic, concrete, verbal and pictorial representations of numbers (identifies written numbers, counts using one to one correspondence, provides number of objects requested, counts objects depicted by pictures).<br>PK.3 Copies numbers 1-10.<br>PK.4 Creates sets of objects up to 10.<br>PK.5 Demonstrates understanding of the concepts more and less.<br>PK.6 Demonstrates seriation of numbers up to 5. |
| Standard C – Understands basic properties of the concept of measurement. | |
| Pre-K Benchmarks | PK.1 Identifies basic tools of measurement (clock, scale, ruler, money and thermometer).<br>PK.2 Understands the function of basic tools of measurement.<br>PK.3 Demonstrates rudimentary use of basic tools of measurement through play.<br>PK.4 Uses non-standard means of measurement in structured activities. |
| Standard D – Understand basic properties of the concepts of geometry. | |
| Pre-K Benchmarks | PK.1 Names and identifies basic shapes (circle, square, triangle, oval, heart, star, rectangle)<br>PK.2 Understands similarities and differences between geometric shapes (number of sides, corners)<br>PK.2 Understands basic spatial concepts (inside, between, next to, over, above, below, behind, on)<br>PK.3 Relates shapes to real life objects.<br>PK.4 Creates different shapes through the use of manipulatives. |
| Standard E – Understands basic concepts of data analysis. | |
| Pre-K Benchmarks | PK.1 Provides input on the creation of picture graphs.<br>PK.2 Creates graphs through the use of manipulatives in structured activities.<br>PK.3 Uses terms most and least to interpret simple bar graphs. |
| Standard F – Understands the general nature and uses of mathematics in real life. | |
| Pre-K Benchmarks | PK.1 Demonstrates mathematics in play (counting, use of money in dramatic play, block design).<br>PK.2 Connects mathematical learning with personal experiences (age, number of people in family, cooking). |

Cognitive Standards and Benchmarks

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| Standard A – Demonstrates competence in taking care of personal needs. | |
| Pre-K Benchmarks | PK.1 Puts on and removes outerwear (hats, mittens, coats, snow pants, shoes, boots)<br>PK.2 Demonstrates independence with buttons, snaps and zippers.<br>PK.3 Takes responsibility for the placement and care of backpacks, clothing and projects.<br>PK.4 Uses bathroom independently.<br>PK.5 Eats independently at snack time.<br>PK.6 Uses tissues appropriately.<br>PK.7 Picks-up toys and belongings. |
| Standard B – Demonstrates social competence. | |
| Pre-K Benchmarks | PK.1 Uses words to describe feelings demonstrated by themselves or others.<br>PK.2 Shares, takes turns and helps others.<br>PK.3Willing to attempt new tasks.<br>PK.4 Resolves disagreements and problems with words.<br>PK.5 Transitions easily to new activities.<br>PK.6 Follows rules and routines.<br>PK.7 Works effectively in small and large groups.<br>PK.8 Completes tasks.<br>PK.9 Uses manners in verbal interaction (please, thank you, excuse me, etc..)<br>PK.10 Willing and able to join others in play.<br>PK.11 Accepts responsibility for own behavior.<br>PK.12 Shows awareness of gender differences.<br>PK.13 Plays group games with simple rules.<br>PK.14 Demonstrates a willingness to talk with and accept guidance and direction from adults. |
| Standard C – Demonstrates age-appropriate play behaviors. | |
| Pre-K Benchmarks | PK.1 Uses parallel and solitary play with blocks, puzzles, beads, art materials, clay/Play-doh, sand/water, Lego blocks and other manipulatives.<br>PK.2 Uses cooperative play with housekeeping toys dolls, dress-up clothes, vehicles, blocks, Legos and other manipulatives.<br>PK.3 Uses sensorimotor play with beads, clay/Play-doh, rice, corn, etc..<br>PK.4 Uses constructive play with blocks, puzzles and art materials.<br>PK.5 Uses dramatic play with housekeeping toys, dolls, dress-up clothes, puppets, vehicles and blocks. |

| Standard D – Demonstrates competence with fine and gross motor skills. | |
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| Pre-K Benchmarks | PK.1 Draws a person with a minimum of 6 recognizable parts.<br>PK.2 Copies simple shapes and uses a scissors to cut simple shapes.<br>PK.3 Uses manipulatives in a variety of activities to improve hand-eye coordination (lacing, peg boards, puzzles, etc..)<br>PK.4 Folds paper to create basic shapes.<br>PK.5 Changes the shape and arrangement of objects by wrapping, twisting, stretching, and stacking.<br>PK.6 Develops strength and dexterity needed to use tools such as stapler, paper punch, hammer, scissors, writing and art tools.<br>PK.7 Shows proficiency in walking, climbing, running, jumping, hopping, skipping, galloping and marching.<br>PK.8 Demonstrates the ability to throw, catch, kick and bounce a ball and navigate age appropriate playground equipment.<br>PK.9 Expresses creativity in movement to music.<br>PK.10 Moves and plays an instrument to a simple beat. |
| Standard E – Demonstrates competence in the development of background knowledge. | |
| Pre-K Benchmarks | PK.1 Demonstrates the ability to understand, observe, describe and discuss the natural world, materials, living things and natural processes (name seasons, describe weather, understand the basic steps in the planting process and state conditions necessary for plant growth<br>PK.2 Demonstrates basic understanding of cause-effect relationships (mixing colors, heat melts snow, etc.)<br>PK.3 Conducts basic experiments in structured activities (sink/float) |
| Standard F – Demonstrates cognitive-language skills | |
| Pre-K Benchmarks | PK.1 Names 8 colors (red, yellow, blue, green, orange, black, purple, white, brown).<br>PK.2 Sequences 3 pictures to tell a story.<br>PK.3 Demonstrates comprehension and use of basic language concepts (time, directional, size, comparative, positional and quantity).<br>PK.4 Demonstrates ability to complete simple verbal analogies (fire is hot but ice is cold).<br>PK.5 States similarities and differences in describing objects.<br>PK.6 Classifies objects by category (food, toys, animals, etc..).<br>PK.7 Recognizes objects by sight, sound, touch, taste and smell.<br>PK.8 Verbally relates models, pictures and photos to real places and things. |

# Wisconsin Forces for Four Year Olds

Community Collaborative Background Information Questions

*Wisconsin is taking part in a planning grant from the Trust for Early Education. The goal of the grant is to collect information and resources from existing communities who are collaborating to provide services to 4 year-olds and have active planning efforts. You are one of the seven (7) communities selected in Wisconsin. The grant's focus is on planning processes, consensus building, delivery approaches, financing mechanisms, resource sharing, personnel approaches, professional development, program standards, and other issues you encountered on your journey to collaboration.*

**Directions: Please provide us with answers to the following questions: If you have written documents that would answer any of the questions – please attach a copy. If your group has not had a chance to answer a particular questions – just mark it NA.**

1. Who are the collaborative stakeholders/partners?

2. Who provides the leadership?

3. What is your collaborative's vision, mission, beliefs and goals?

4. What is your organizational structure? Do you have by-laws?

5. What is your governance structure for decision-making and problem solving?

6. How do you determine roles and responsibilities in the collaborative?

7. How is your collaborative effort funded? How are finances managed? Is there an annual reporting process?

8. What is your program model(s) or delivery approaches(s)? Where is the program(s) housed?

9. What resources are shared in the collaborative?

10. How are program standards and curriculum determined?

## Wisconsin Forces for Four Year Olds

Community Collaborative Background Information Questions

11. How do you determine personnel? Is certification / licensure necessary for all service providers?

12. How do you determine professional development opportunities for staff in your collaborative?

13. Are there other services for 4-year olds in your community that are not associated with your collaborative?

Additional comments / information:

Collaborative Program _____ Date _____

Name / Organization _____ Phone # _____

Email address: _____

# Wisconsin Forces for four Year Olds
## Focus Group Questions

### Open-ended focus group questions:

### Grounding:

- Introduce yourself
- From your perspective, how did this collaborative get started?
- What are your expectations for today's session?

### Questions:

1. What are the collaborative's greatest successes?

2. From your point of view, what are the big issues that the collaborative faces?

3. What are the benefits (and drawbacks) to your collaborative effort for four year olds?

4. How has your collaborative changed over time? (old)
   What is the most important change you've made in the collaborative? (new)

5. What lessons have you learned?
   For example: If there were a lesson you would have liked to know before or during the process of your collaboration, what would it have been?

6. Tell us about a time the collaborative hit a roadblock and how it got resolved?

### Final Questions:

1. Is there anything you would like to add that has not been said? (?)
2. Is there anyone who was not able to come or not invited today that we could interview to get further information?
3. Would any of you be interested in being ambassadors to Forces for 4's?

November 14, 2002 rev.3

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EFF-089 (1/2003)

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